



Delta
Naturalists
Society

Oliver BC Fieldtrip Itinerary

June 21 to 25, 2026 (Sunday to Thursday)

Day 1: Sunday, June 21, 2026

07:00 - Depart Vancouver for Manning Park (~2.5 hours)

Manning Park Resort & Lightning Lake

09:30 - Stop at Manning Park Resort for snacks, coffee, restrooms, and casual birding around the resort parking lot. Look for Clark's Nutcracker, Steller's Jay, Common Raven, Brown-headed Cowbird, Violet-green Swallow, and Columbian ground squirrels.

[Manning Park eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

10:00 - We'll make a relatively quick stop in on the spectacular **Lightning Lake**, a short five-minutes drive past the main lodge (has restrooms, too). Here, we'll look for water fowl (Common Loon and Barrow's Goldeneye); poke around in the pine forests for Chestnut-backed and Mountain Chickadee, Varied Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Canada Jay; and listen out for warbles and the drumming of Sooty Grouse.

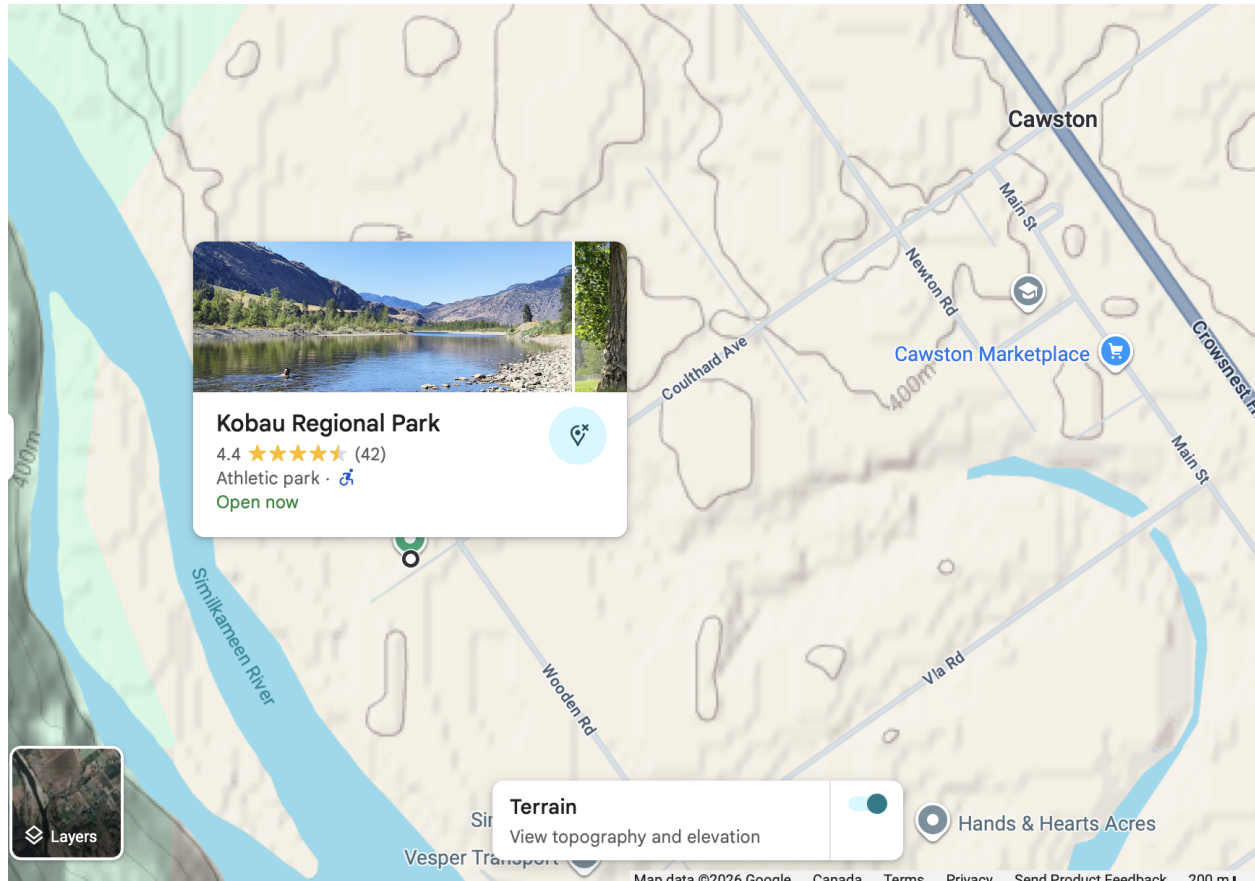
[Lightning Lake eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

Interesting fact: Canada Jays also go by the nickname "whisky jack", which is derived from the Cree word "Wisakedjak" for benevolent trickster!

11:00 - Depart Lightning Lake for Cawston (~ 2 hours)

Kobau Regional Park & Ginty's Pond

13:00 - Picnic lunch at Kobau Regional Park in Cawston (end of Coulthard Avenue).



Coulthard Avenue in Cawston terminates at the Similkameen River and around us, will be the **Kobau Regional Park**. Our field trip to this very site in 2022 yielded a trove of birdlife, including Lewis's Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, and Common Nighthawk, which we flushed up from the road. Failing these more exotic species, we'll look for the interior's more common species, like Gray Catbird, Black-billed Magpie, and California Quail.

Other species to look out for include all three nuthatch species (Red-breasted, Pygmy, and White-breasted), Canyon Wren (singing across the river), American Dipper (on exposed rocks in the river), and Golden Eagle (on the cliffs opposite the river and soaring in the skies above).

[Cawston – Kobau Regional Park eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

15:00 - Once we've satisfied our bellies and bird lists, we can make a quick stop at **Ginty's Pond**, which is the southernmost end of an oxbow slough. The riparian thickets embracing the pond are a favorite of warblers and flycatchers and all three species of teal (Green-winged, Blue-winged, and Cinnamon) have been reported nesting here.

Last time we were here, the reeds obstructed our view of the pond, so we may need to resort to birding by ear. Listen out for Sora, Virginia Rail, Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and Marsh Wren.

[Ginty's Pond eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)



16:00 - Depart for Oliver and hotel check ins (~45 min)

From Cawston, there are a couple of routes to Oliver. One is a short cut through a high mountain pass. At 26 km, this route is shorter, but the condition of the road and its windiness mean it'll take you about the same amount of time to get to Oliver as it does by the longer routes to the north (highway 3A) and south (highway 3), which are around 60-65 km each. Whichever way you go, it should take about 45 minutes to get to Oliver.

Dinner: Flealess Hound Pub

18:30 - Meet at the Flealess Hound Pub (8380 Gallagher Lake Frontage Road)

Website: <https://www.flealesshound.com/>

Phone: (250) 498-9017

Cuisine: Elevated pub food with local ingredients, including vegan and gluten-free options.

Day 2: Monday, June 22, 2026

07:45 - Meet at [Big Al's Deli & Bakery](#). **Be on time for a briefing!**

If you want to pick up a coffee and breakfast, please arrive earlier (the café opens at 07:00 every morning) because we'll be departing at **08:00 sharp**.

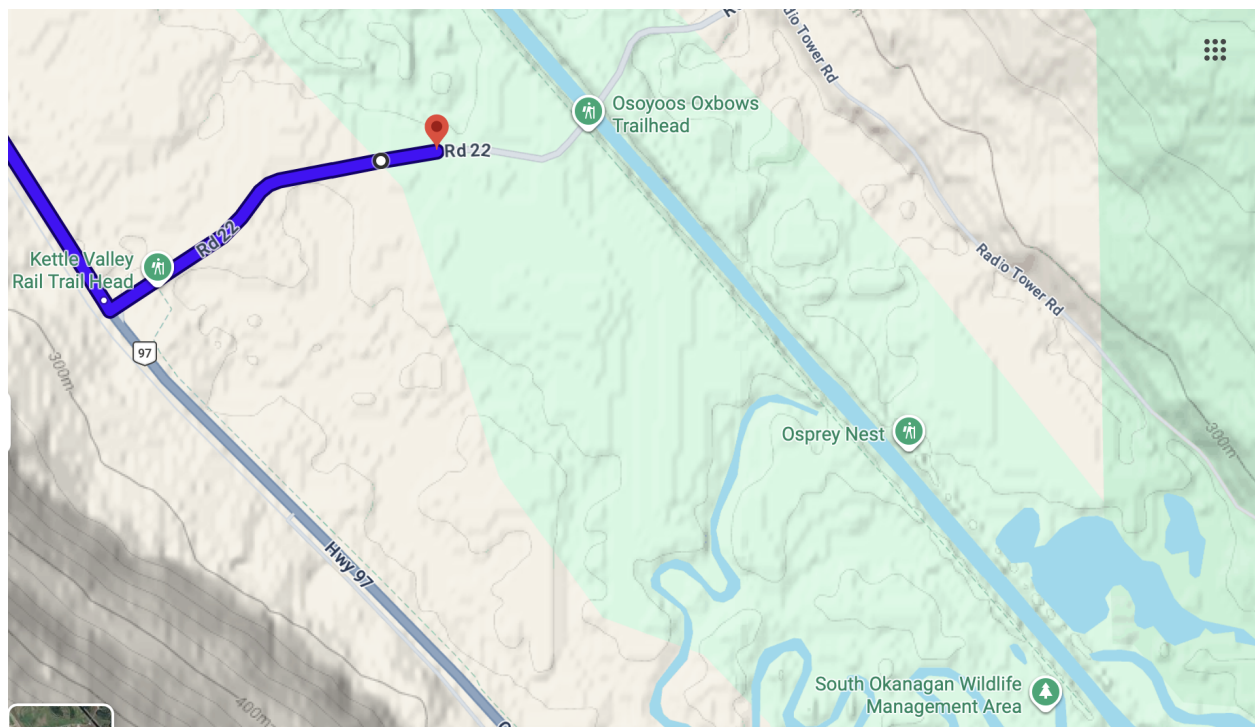
(**Tip:** if you don't want to bother with packing your own picnic lunch, this is probably an excellent place to pick something up for later!)

Deadmans Lake at Road 21 & Osoyoos Oxbow Trail at Road 22

08:10 - A 10-minute drive south on Road 97, we'll turn left onto Road 21 and make a quick pitstop at **Deadman Lake**, a small and shallow lake that's prime for shorebirds and water fowl.

[Deadman Lake eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

08:30 - We'll then continue down Road 97, take the next left onto Road 22, and park to embark upon the **Osoyoos Oxbow Trail**, "one of the finest birding spots in Canada" according to Cannings' 'Birdfinding in BC' guide.



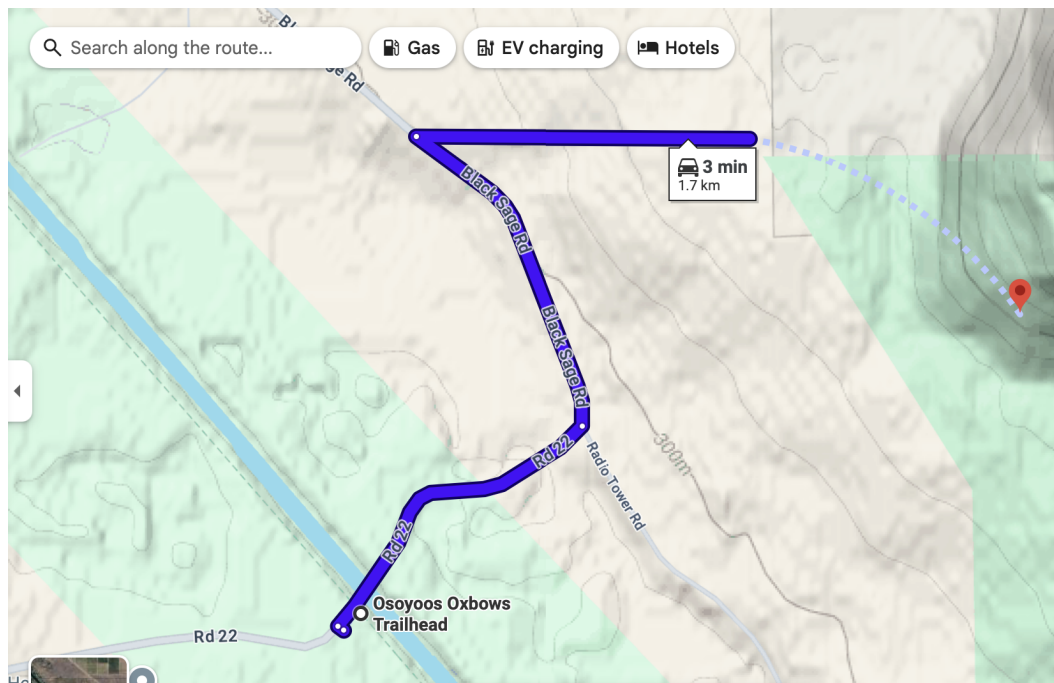
We'll look out for gulls, terns, Osprey, and waterfowl (Wood Duck, teals, Redhead, etc.) on the river and Gray Catbird, Veery (thrush), Northern Yellow Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, flycatchers, and House Wren in the birch groves, among dozens of other species. All five species of swallow have been seen here, too (Barn, Violet-green, Tree, Cliff, and Bank).

Top (rare) targets for this particular outing would be Bobolinks, which we saw in 2022 and Yellow-breasted Chats, a few pairs of which have nested in the rose thickets on the east side of the river.

[Osoyoos, Road 22 & Dykes eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

Haynes' Lease Ecological Reserve

11:00 - A short three-minute drive over the bridge on Road 22, left onto Black Sage Road, and then immediately left onto Meadowlark Lane, brings us to **Haynes' Lease Ecological Reserve**.



Here, we'll stop to look for Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, White-throated Swift, Chukar (partridge), and Canyon Wren on the cliffs and talus slopes of "The Throne", the large bluff forming the northeast corner of the reserve.

Rock Wrens, Lazuli Bunting, Cassin's Finch, and Lewis's Woodpeckers are often heard singing and calling from the trees and bushes surrounding the cliffs. Lark Sparrows are common in the antelope brush.

[Haynes Lease Ecological Reserve eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

Osoyoos Desert Center

12:00 - We'll make our way across the valley, 10-minutes south on Road 97, turning right onto 146 Avenue, for a picnic lunch at the [Osoyoos Desert Center](#), a 67-acre nature interpretive facility.

13:00 - 14:00 - Guided tour (\$10 each) along a 1.5 km boardwalk through one of Canada's most rare, fragile and endangered ecosystems: the semi-arid antelope-brush. It's also home to a rich array of birdlife!

Contact: Jayme Friedt Executive Director (+1-250-495-2470)

We'll be on the lookout for Western Bluebird and Western Kingbird (which nest there), as well as California Quail, Bullock's Oriole, American Kestrel, Calliope Hummingbird, Western Meadowlark, and Chipping, Clay-colored, and Vesper Sparrows.

[Osoyoos Desert Center eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

14:30 - Return to our accommodations to rest.

Evening Walk, Starting at the Oliver Visitor Center: Optional

17:00 - In the evening, the Okanagan River becomes raucous with activity as the birds gorge themselves on a feast of flying insects in preparation for the night.

Swifts, swallows, flycatchers, and warblers whizz up and down and across the river; while catbirds, orioles, blackbirds, kingbirds and other singing passerines frolic about the bushes. Even just a one-hour walk can yield a birdlist of 30 species.

So, to whet our appetite before dinner, we'll meet at the **Oliver Visitor Center** (Station Street) and go for an evening walk (heading north) along the banks of the river.

[Oliver--Okanagan River dykes eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

Dinner: Howling Coyote Pub

18:30 - Meet at the Howling Coyote Pub (6341 Main Street, Oliver)

Website: <https://thehowlingcoyotepub.ca>

Phone: (250) 485-4889

Cuisine: Classic pub fare with burgers, fish & chips, and hearty comfort food.

Day 3: Tuesday, June 23, 2026

07:45 - Meet at [Big Al's Deli & Bakery](#). **Be on time for a briefing!**

McKinney Roadside Birding

A note on roadside birding: there are a number of points along the road that have been identified as hotspots (kilometers 3 and 10 being examples). We'll stop here, park on the side of

the road, and walk for a few hundred meters in search of birdlife. Telescopes will likely be useful for scanning the flats and sagebrush.

While driving, we may also suddenly pull over if we notice a lot of activity, so we'll form a slow convoy along this road and pull over as needed, not only to birdwatch but to allow local traffic to pass us.



08:00 - We'll explore McKinney Road for a morning of classic sagebrush and open pine forest birding, beginning our search as the road climbs onto Manuel's Flats. After kilometer 3, this wide, open plateau offers opportunities for Long-billed Curlew (often near power lines), Killdeer, Vesper Sparrow, and Lark Sparrow, with the latter frequently found around rock piles at the east end of the flats. Sage Thrasher is occasionally reported here as well.

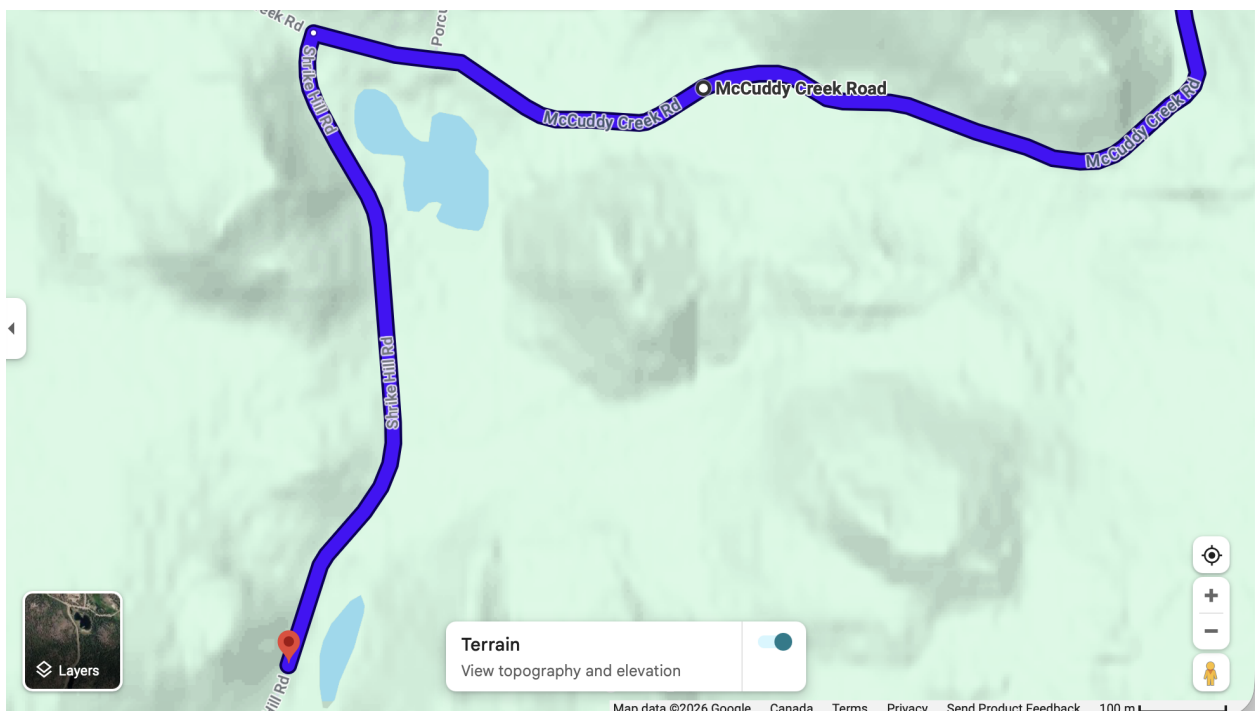
As we continue, we'll pass through small creek crossings with riparian habitat that can produce Nashville Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, Western Bluebird, and Calliope Hummingbird.

Around kilometre 10 (see red pin on map above), we'll stop to look for Gray Flycatcher, best detected by its distinctive "chilep-chilep" song in the pines near the cattle guard. This area also supports a variety of open forest species including Clark's Nutcracker, nuthatches, Cassin's Finch, Red Crossbill, Townsend's Solitaire, and Chipping Sparrow.

[McKinney Road \(km 10\) eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)



We'll then continue approximately 2 km down McKinney Road, taking a slight right onto Old Camp McKinney Road and then another slight right onto McCuddy Creek Road. Here, additional Gray Flycatchers are possible and, *with a whole lotta luck*, a White-headed Woodpecker. We can then finish by checking nearby ponds along Shrike Hill Road for waterfowl and shorebirds.



12:00 - Picnic lunch at one of the two ponds. Hopefully, we'll find a decent spot to put out some picnic blankets and chairs. If not, we can backtrack and have lunch near the visitor center in Oliver.

13:00 - 14:00 Head back to Oliver with possible stops along the way home.

Afternoon downtime.

s̀wìw̃s (Haynes Point) Provincial Park, 32 Ave, Osoyoos

17:00 - In the late afternoon, we'll meet at Haynes Point—a 20-minute drive south of Oliver (so leave around 16:40)—to explore this provincial park and camping ground. In 2022, we not only encountered a flock of sleeping Common Nighthawk here but a young family of Great Horned Owls too! The picnic and camping grounds attract a lot of passerines, and we'll look for gulls, grebes, loons, and ducks on Osoyoos Lake.

[s̀wìw̃s Provincial Park \(Haynes Point\) eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

Dinner: Owl Pub

18:30 - Meet at Owl Pub in **Osoyoos**, not Oliver (7603 Spartan Dr, Osoyoos)

Website: <https://www.owlpubosoyoos.com/>

Phone: (778) 437-3838

Cuisine: Typical pub fare but we'll be there on Taco Tuesday! They don't take reservations so while they have a big space, we may be split up.

Day 4: Wednesday, June 24, 2026

07:45 - Meet at [Big Al's Deli & Bakery](#). **Be on time for a briefing!**

White Lake Basin & Mahoney Lake

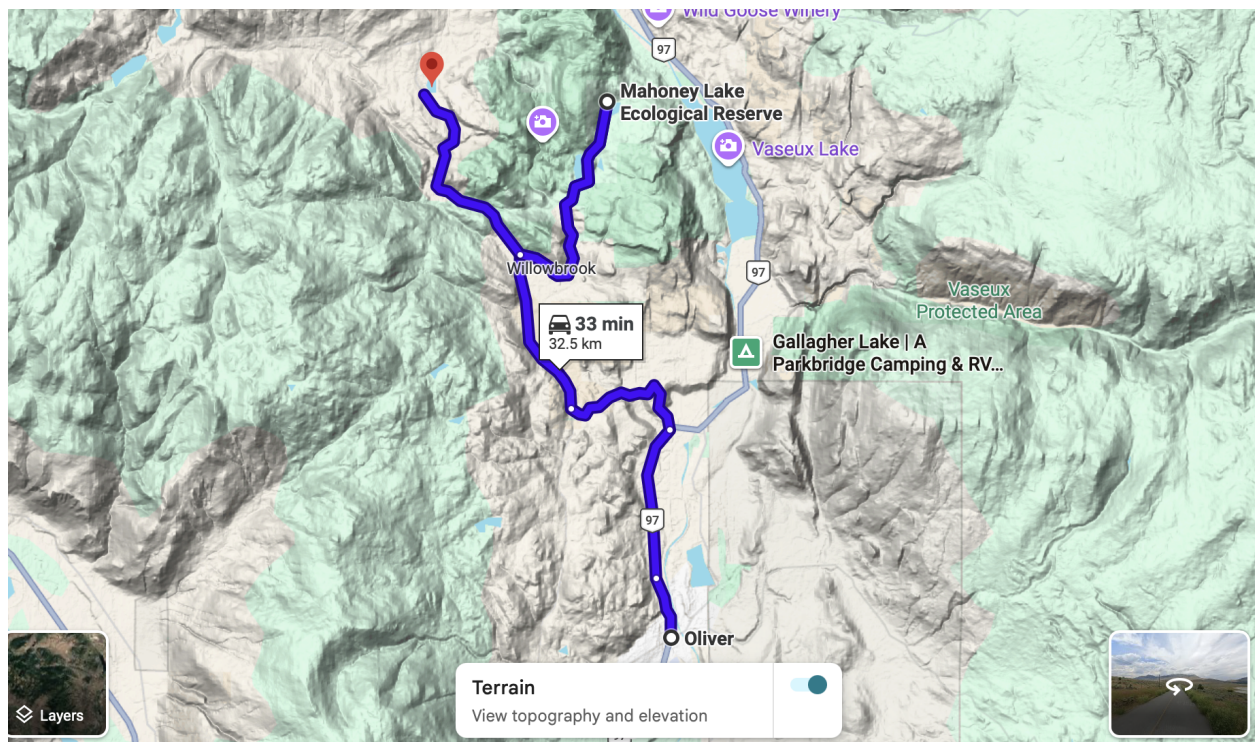
08:00 - From Oliver, we'll drive north along Highway 97 toward Okanagan Falls for about 5.5 km, before turning left onto Seacrest Hill Road and then right onto Willowbrook Road. After 8 km, we'll turn left onto Fairview White Lake Road. Another 5 km on and we reach the **White Lake Basin**, a globally significant pocket of antelope-brush and sagebrush steppe.

08:30 - We'll begin birding from the parking area and along the accessible tracks, scanning the open slopes and air above for White-throated Swift, Western Meadowlark, and a quartet of sparrows: Vesper, Brewer's, Lark Sparrow, and Chipping Sparrows. Mountain Bluebird and American Kestrel commonly perch on the power lines alongside the road, so keep your eyes peeled!

The real target for this location, however, is the often-elusive Sage Thrasher, for which White Lake is one of the best places in Canada. We'll take time to carefully listen and scan for it (activity peaks in the early morning).

The surrounding slopes are also excellent for raptors, including Golden Eagle, and we'll keep an eye out for Chukar and Gray Partridge along the tracks if we're lucky. The lake itself can host waterbirds such as Ruddy Duck and Bufflehead, and both goldeye species have been recorded.

[White Lake–Okanagan Falls eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)



10:30 - After exploring White Lake, we'll backtrack down Fairview White Lake Road to Green Lake Road, which climbs through open pine forest to **Mahoney Lake**. Here, we'll check the shoreline, water, reeds, and surrounding slopes for ducks, shorebirds, passerines, and woodpeckers. (A rare target would be the White-headed Woodpecker.)

During our 2022 visit, we saw Ruddy Duck, American Coot (with tiny babies!), Pied-billed Grebe, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds here, while the pine forests yielded Western Tanager, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red Crossbill, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cassin's Finch, and a gorgeous female Ruffed Grouse!

[Mahoney Lake eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)

12:00 - Drive 8 minutes north to **Christie Memorial Park** in Okanagan Falls, a lovely little park on the southern shores of Skaha Lake, where we can stop for lunch. There are restrooms here.

The lake is home to several species of gulls (Ring-billed, Herring, and California Gulls), ducks, mergansers, and grebes. If we're lucky, we may add American White Pelicans and Canvasback to our list! #manifest

[Christie Memorial Park eBird Hotspot \(June\)](#)



Vaseux Lake & Eagle Bluff

13:00 - After lunch, we'll head to the northern reaches of Vaseux Lake, a shallow freshwater lake located along the course of the Okanagan River. In 2022, we saw Redhead and Trumpeter Swan here. We'll then cross the road and wind our way up the gravel track (which hugs the aptly-named Eagle Bluff) in search of Canyon Wren, Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, and bighorn sheep.

[Vaseux Lake Bird Observatory eBird Hotspot List](#)

15:00 - Head back to Oliver for some rest

Dinner: Burrowing Owl Winery

17:30 - Meet at the Sonora Room Restaurant at Burrowing Owl Winery for a celebratory (final night) dinner.

17:30 - 18:30: A glass of wine on the balcony

18:30: Three-course meal will be served.

Day 5: Thursday, June 25, 2026

09:00 - Meet at [Big Al's Deli & Bakery](#) for breakfast. **Note later starting time.**

After four full days of birding (and a potentially later night) I don't imagine many of us will be up for an early morning. As such, my suggestion at this point is to meet at Big Al's for breakfast before driving back to Vancouver. Those who wish to return to a productive birding spot (or check out another we missed) are free to do so!

For now, we'll leave this day relatively open.