

Presented By: UNBC's Natural
Resources & Environmental
Studies Institute



**Thursday
March 21, 2024**

**Presentation
7:30 pm**

**Room
8-166
UNBC Prince George
Campus**

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remotely by
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PUBLIC PRESENTATION



Hidden biodiversity: the fascinating life of parasitic lice that infest birds

Guest Presenter: Dr. Terry D. Galloway

Department of Entomology
University of Manitoba

Presentation Summary:

There is tremendous interest in birds in Canada, of which there are more than 700 species recorded. Information about these birds comes from diverse sources, from amateur birders to professional ornithologists. However, few people appreciate the hidden diversity of parasitic lice that infest these birds, and in fact, our knowledge about the louse fauna is limited. Barely 50% of the expected fauna infesting birds in Canada has been recorded, most of which are from only a few occurrences. Part of the reason for this is the cryptic nature of these lice, most of which are relatively small and live deep within their hosts' pelage. In addition, most people have little opportunity to see these birds up close, or to handle them, and so never appreciate the diversity of their lice. We know almost nothing about basic ecological relationships of chewing lice with their hosts, including seasonal occurrence, prevalence, intensity of infestation, geographic distribution, and impact on host fitness and well being. I want to tell you about my experiences with this mysterious group of ectoparasites, most of which spend the majority of their time outside Canada, accumulated over more than 30 years, and having examined nearly 12,000 specimens of birds, of 243 species. I plan to introduce you to some of the most bizarre examples of parasitic lice, and even why we need to keep our attention on even the most familiar birds, such the introduced rock pigeon.

Terry is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Entomology, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. Before he retired in 2013, he was a veterinary and wildlife entomologist in the department and during that time, he also served as the curator of the J.B. Wallis/R.E. Roughley Museum of Entomology, the largest university-based insect collection in Canada, which holds more than one million specimens. Terry has taught more than 30 university courses in the Department of Entomology at the University of Manitoba and in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. He continues to give a small number of lectures each year in World of Bugs, where he gets the chance to address some of his greatest entomological passions. His research was focussed mainly on the impact and biology of arthropods that affect domestic animals and livestock, but a major area of interest is in the ectoparasites of vertebrates, especially wildlife. He has published more than 100 scientific papers, plus numerous popular articles in magazines and newsletters. A collaborative effort, A Handbook to the Ticks of Canada (Ixodida: Ixodidae, Argasidae), was published in 2016. His research on ectoparasites continues in the Department of Entomology.

All are welcome to participate. There is no cost to attend and no registration required to attend in person. However, pre-registration is required to tune in remotely.

The Natural Resources & Environmental Studies Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia, together with its partners, invite those with interest in learning more about parasitic lice to participate in this online presentation and discussion.

This event is funded by the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP). The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, Fisheries & Oceans Canada, First Nations, Public Stakeholders and the Province of BC, to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by existing BC Hydro dams.