



Charles Brandt photo

'Brambling' rare sight for Vancouver Island

The Christmas bird count is coming up this Sunday, and to be certain, rare birds are often to be found in the area.

Pictured here, in a photo by Fr. Charles Brandt, is an adult female 'Brambling', which was identified on Dec. 1 at the feeder of Heather Asplin on Springbok in Campbell River. It was feeding both at the feeder and on the ground, in association with pine siskins, juncos, towhees, Stellar jays and chickadees.

The Brambling, with a tawny breast and shoulders, and white rump, is native to Europe and Asia and was first observed in North America in October, 1914 on St. Paul Island in Alaska. In its summer coloring, the male has a black head and back. It is also known as the Bramble Finch and Mountain Finch.

It is a rare sighting for Vancouver Island, but has been observed by a number of birders at the same site in the past week-and-a-half. It is hoped it will remain in the area until the Christmas bird count.