

# Rare bird sighting report



A rare longbilled curlew was sited at Croteau Beach, April 19, 2003.

This is the first sighting ever for the Comox Valley. One was spotted on Mittenatch Island, on April 25, 1983.

This extremely rare bird for the Comox Valley was first observed by a resident living on Midden Road near the beach. Its identification was confirmed by Nathan Hentz of Cumberland and by Father Charles Brandt of Black Creek who photographed the curlew.

The shorebird, 23" in height

with a wingspan of 35" was feeding in shallow water along with Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs.

The curlew has an extremely long bill which is used for probing in the mud and sand to discover food. Nathan states that the bird has a small notch near the tip of the bill, that the underwings are buff in color when seen in flight and has a bit of an eyering at the back of the eye. Wayne Campbell writes that it breeds from southern interior B.C., and winters on coastal low-

lands from California. Campbell states that it is a spring migrant on the coast of B.C.

*Photo by Father Charles Brandt*