

ADDITIONAL WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS ALONG THE SOURIS RIVER, MAY 1985

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In the December 1985 issue of the Blue Jay the author summarised wildlife observations along the Souris River during three canoe trips; 1978, 1979, 1980. On 18-19 May 1985 Douglas Boivin, Terry Toews, Barb Weidl and the author returned to canoe part of the Souris River in the Oxbow area. On 18 May the party canoed 14 km downstream from Bow Valley Regional Park. On 19 May the canoes were launched at a point 8 km upstream from Bow Valley Regional Park with the day trip terminating at the park. The weather was clear on both days with temperatures ranging from +10°C to +23°C and winds west at 20-30 kmph.

A small dam downstream from the regional park provided sufficient water

for the trip above the park on 19 May. Water levels downstream from the park were low but no major hazards, except the dam, were encountered. Lush tree cover along the river banks again provided good habitat for birds and other species of wildlife.

Muskrat, mink, Beaver, Raccoon, Coyote, Woodchuck and White-tailed Deer were observed. No Fox Squirrels were seen during the 1985 outing. A total of 94 Western Painted Turtles were seen over the two days. Two Common Snapping Turtles were seen on 19 May, upstream from Bow Valley Regional Park. Again these turtles were very shy and it was only after a 30-minute wait that they briefly emerged, allowing a second look.



Female Common Yellow Throat

Andrius Valadka

Altogether 77 bird species were observed during the two-day outing. This included birds seen along the immediate river bank as well as from some of the upper regions of the river valley. Of these, 14 were new species for our "all time list," making a total of 102 bird species recorded along the Souris River by the author. Table 1 lists the birds

observed during the 1985 outing.

The author and members of the canoe trip were again impressed by the diversity of wildlife along the Souris River. If weather and time permit a fifth canoe trip is planned along a different section of the Souris River next spring.

Table 1. BIRD SPECIES OBSERVED ALONG THE SOURIS RIVER, 18-19 MAY 1985.

<i>Species</i>	<i># Seen</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i># Seen</i>
*Double-crested Cormorant	2	Bank Swallow	6
Great Blue Heron	4	Cliff Swallow	500+
Wood Duck	4 pair	Barn Swallow	+
Mallard	10 pair	Blue Jay	6
Northern Pintail	1 pair	Black-billed Magpie	8
Blue-winged Teal	4 pair	American Crow	3
Northern Shoveler	1	Black-capped Chickadee	6
American Widgeon	3 pair	*White-breasted Nuthatch	2
*Canvasback	1 female injured	House Wren	+
		*Eastern Bluebird	1 male
*Lesser Scaup	1 pair	*Gray-cheeked Thrush	1
Northern Harrier	1	*Swainson's Thrush	4
Cooper's Hawk	1	American Robin	+
Swainson's Hawk	5	Brown Thrasher	1
Red-tailed Hawk	2	Cedar Waxwing	2
*American Coot	1	Warbling Vireo	3
Killdeer	+	*Tennessee Warbler	8
Solitary Sandpiper	1	*Orange-crowned Warbler	1
Willet	1	Yellow Warbler	+
Spotted Sandpiper	+	*Blackpoll Warbler	1
Upland Sandpiper	1	Black-and-white Warbler	1
Franklin's Gull	5	American Redstart	3
Black Tern	1	Northern Waterthrush	4
Mourning Dove	+	Common Yellowthroat	2
Great Horned Owl	4	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	+
Belted Kingfisher	+	Rufous-sided Towhee	2
*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	6	Chipping Sparrow	+
Downy Woodpecker	2	Clay-colored Sparrow	+
Hairy Woodpecker	2	Vesper Sparrow	6
Northern Flicker	2	Song Sparrow	5
*Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	Bobolink	7
Western Wood-Pewee	1	Red-winged Blackbird	6
Least Flycatcher	+	Western Meadowlark	2
Western Kingbird	2	Brewer's Blackbird	2
Eastern Kingbird	1	Common Grackle	6
Horned Lark	+	Brown-headed Cowbird	+
*Purple Martin	+	Northern Oriole	+
Tree Swallow	6	American Goldfinch	+
N. Rough-winged Swallow	+	House Sparrow	+

* = species added to our "all time list."

+ = more than 10 individuals seen over the two days.