

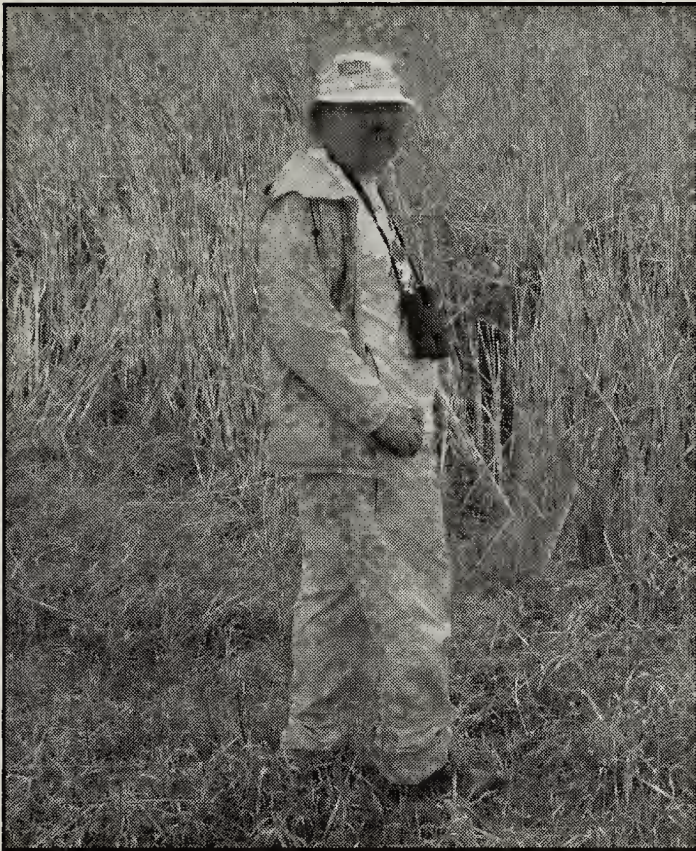
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# IN MEMORIAM

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## IN MEMORIAM: DAVID CHASKAVICH 1953–2010

DON WEIDL, 436-2nd St. E., Saskatoon, SK, S7H 1P1



*David Chaskavich at one of his favourite birding spots at East Ekapo Lake, SK, May 2008.*

David J. Chaskavich was born on 23 March 1953 in Broadview, Saskatchewan, and passed away in Regina after a long battle with cancer. At 13 years old, it was very evident that David's passion for nature would last a lifetime. Influenced by Jack Lane and Lorne Scott, David started building bluebird houses even before he had a driver's licence and put them up in the Broadview area as an arm of the Manitoba/Saskatchewan Bluebird Trail. At one time, David was looking after 250 bluebird houses and successfully had Eastern Bluebirds nesting in several of them. Over the next 40 years, many of the landowners in the Broadview area would

often comment on how nice it was to see bluebirds and Tree Swallows nesting on their land.

After attending college in Vermillion, Alberta, from 1975 to 1977, and later cooking school, David settled back in Broadview, where he became a cook at the Broadview seniors' home. Over the next 25 years, David's yard in Broadview became a birder's paradise. Not only was David a good birder, he was also an excellent gardener – his yard was full of trees, shrubs, and flowers, which attracted a number of bird species. Some of David's "firsts" for the Broadview area included Orchard Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, and House Finch.

From 1968 to the mid-1980's, David accompanied Manley Callin and a host of other birders including Frank Brazier, Elmer Callin, Johnny Nelson, and Don Weidl on an annual 2-day bird survey in the Broadview area. Day 1 included coverage of the Crooked/Round Lake areas north of Broadview, while Day 2 included the Ekapo Lake area south of Broadview. During these surveys and trips to Fort Qu'Appelle to visit Manley, David's birding skills excelled. David contributed many species accounts to Manley Callin's *Birds of the Qu'Appelle, 1857-1979*, which was published in 1980. Some of David's contributions included Yellow-crowned Night Heron and Northern Parula. On 18 May 2008, David, Carman Dodge, and Don Weidl conducted a 40th anniversary bird

count in honour of Manley's trips to the Broadview area.\*

David was a long-time member of Nature Saskatchewan and attended many of the fall and spring meets across Saskatchewan. Like many members, David quietly did his part for the environment. In 1999, David moved to an acreage north of Wolseley where he started to create another birder's paradise. With his wife, Lorrie, he planted over 3000 shrubs and trees and slowly educated his neighbours on the values of wildlife and nature. He conducted annual Christmas Bird Counts in the Broadview area from 1966, and even though he was very ill, he completed a Christmas Bird Count on 26 December 2009.

David said he was born 150 years too late, as he often dreamed of being a pioneer on the prairies and seeing the herds of bison and flocks of passenger pigeons. In his own way, David was a pioneer and had a big influence on people in the Broadview and Wolseley areas with regards to the environment and conservation. Lorrie, his daughter Stephanie, and his granddaughter Anika continue to plant trees on the acreage. David will be missed by his friends and family.

**\*EDITORS' NOTE:** see Don Weidl's article "40th anniversary of the Manley Callin Ekapo Lake Bird Outing", *Blue Jay* 67:106-108, for more on this anniversary bird count.

## IN MEMORIAM: MARY GILLILAND 1940–2010

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*Portrait of Mary Gilliland taken in 1984.  
Photo courtesy of Sean Gilliland.*

On 19 April 2010, Saskatchewan lost a woman originally from Wisconsin who left her mark in numerous ways. Her life was nature-centered, evident even in her e-mail address "birdwoman@...." and her licence plate, "BIRDS-1".

Mary served for 10 years on the board of the Canadian Nature Federation (CNF), the "umbrella group" for provincial and regional nature societies across Canada; for eight of these years she was Vice-President, President, and Past-President – the first Saskatchewan person to be national president. Because of Mary's work that helped achieve proclamation of the Grasslands National Park, the Saskatchewan Society received the Affiliate Award from CNF in 1990. Mary introduced the BirdQuest program to