

52ND ANNUAL SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTMAS MAMMAL COUNT - 2024

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Of the 71 Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) conducted last winter, almost all, 67, were accompanied by a Christmas Mammal Count (CMC). This is a decrease of 14 counts compared to last year. In spite of the hefty loss in coverage, 3,152 mammals were counted compared to the previous winter's 2,884. Variety was up as well, as 33 species were heard or seen on count day compared to last year's 29.

Much of the increase in numbers was due to White-tailed Deer, which increased from 610 in 2023-24 to 1,089 individuals

this past winter. Mule Deer, on the other hand, decreased slightly from 586 to 530 animals.

Perhaps in response to record numbers of Gray Partridge, numbers of Coyote rose from 173 animals on 47 counts last year to 278 on 45 counts this year; Red Fox jumped from 23 on 16 counts to 81 on 33 counts.

Given its low reproductive rate of only one young a year, it is more difficult to explain the increase in Porcupine from nine on eight counts last year to 28 on 18 counts this year. Obviously, much needs to be learned about the population ecology of the species.

Rarities included a Wolverine, which was seen on the La Ronge count.

Interestingly, the only previous records were both recent: during the count period on 24 December 2023 near the E.B. Campbell Dam, and on the Nisbet Forest West Count on 26 December 2022. A Bobcat on the E.B. Campbell count was also of note.

Craven and Indian Head had the most species seen or heard with 10.

No new species were added this past count. The all-time provincial total of species seen or heard remains at 52, plus three species found dead and three others recorded only on the basis of tracks.

For information on participants, weather, coverage and location of CMCs, see the CBC summary in this issue.

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Explanation of entries in Table 1

The number of mammals actually seen or heard on count day is treated separately from those recorded by other means, or those recorded during count period (14 December to 5 January) but not on count day. Numbers of individuals seen or heard are given in Table 1 and are tallied in the first line of totals at the bottom of the table. The number of species they represent is given in the second line.

For species only detected by tracks or by other means, or that are seen or heard only in the count period but not on count day, no numbers of individuals is given in Table 1. Species detected only by tracks are indicated by 't' in the table; those detected only by other means — dead animals 'm', more clearly identifiable chewing or digging 'd', dens or lodges 'l' (including Muskrat push-ups) and by smell 's.' Species detected by any means during the count period, but not on count day are indicated by 'c' in the table. These additional species are tallied in lines three, four and five at the bottom of the table. If a mammal is reported as member of a species group (i.e. mouse species, deer species), it is counted as a species only if no other species in this group has been definitely recorded. The columns at the end of the table give totals for each species.

TABLE 1. 51st Saskatchewan Christmas Mammal Count - 2024.

SPECIES	ARCHERWILL 18 DEC 2024	AVONLEA 22 DEC 2024	BALGONIE 1 JAN 2025	BIGGAR 15 DEC 2024	BORDEN - RADISSON 20 DEC 2024	BROADVIEW 22 DEC 2024	CANDLE LAKE 5 JAN 2025	CARLYLE 30 DEC 2024	CLARK'S CROSSING 14 DEC 2024	CRAVEN 14 DEC 2024	CROOKED LAKE 17 DEC 2024	CROOKED RIVER 30 DEC 2024	CYPRESS HILLS P.P. 30 DEC 2024	DENHOLM 25 DEC 2024	DORINTOSH 22 DEC 2024	DUNDURN 19 DEC 2024	E. B. CAMPBELL DAM 21 DEC 2024	ESTEVAN 5 JAN 2025	ESTUARY NORTH 27 DEC 2024
Shrew species															t				
Eastern Cottontail																		7	
Nuttall's Cottontail													1						
Snowshoe Hare			t		t	t			t	4	t			1	t		t		
White-tailed Jack Rabbit	c		4	t		t			t					t		t		2	
Richardson's Ground Squirrel						1				1									
Eastern Grey Squirrel																			
Eastern Fox Squirrel		1	13			3		7		15								8	
American Red Squirrel	c				2	1	12			1	6		6	c	t		7		
Northern Flying-Squirrel														1					
Northern Pocket Gopher																			
American Beaver						L	L												
Deer Mouse	c					t								c					
Muskrat						L													
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole										1				c					
Meadow Vole																			
Vole species															t				
Norway Rat																			
House Mouse										t									
Mouse species											t				t				
American Porcupine		1	2		2				2	1								2	1
Coyote	c		4	6		3			12	6	1		1	1	t	2	t	4	
Gray Wolf							3										1		
Red Fox	t	3		1		4	t			2				8	t	t	t		1
Raccoon																			
American Marten	c																c		
Fisher															t		1		
Ermine													1				t		
Least Weasel																			
Long-tailed Weasel						t													1
Weasel species	c		t				t								t				
American Mink											c						1		
Wolverine																			
American Badger														1					
Striped Skunk																	1		
River Otter											1				t		t		
Bobcat																			
Canada Lynx							t								t				
Mule Deer	c	34	25	13		2		9	5	8	2			2		25		30	3
White-tailed Deer	c	143	26	15		23	11		12	26	24	1	16	2	t	11	10	9	35
Deer species		11	12																
Moose	c			2		4		1			3	2		c	t				
Elk	c					c						c							9
Pronghorn																			200
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	0	193	86	37	4	41	26	17	31	65	37	3	25	16	0	38	21	62	250
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	0	5	6	5	2	8	3	3	4	10	6	2	5	7	0	3	6	7	7
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	1	0	2	1	1	4	3	0	2	1	2	0	0	1	13	2	5	0	0
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	10	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	11	5	8	6	3	15	7	3	6	11	9	3	5	12	13	5	12	7	7

SPECIES	FENTON 26 DEC 2024	FLORAL 30 DEC 2024	FORT QUAPPELLE 14 DEC 2024	GARDINER DAM 16 DEC 2024	GRENFELL 02 JAN 2025	HARRIS 14 DEC 2024	INDIAN HEAD 27 DEC 2024	KENASTON 15 DEC 2024	KENOSEE LAKE 2 JAN 2025	KILWINNING 26 DEC 2024	KYLE 31 DEC 2024	LARONGE 26 DEC 2024	LOVE-TORCH RIVER 26 DEC 2024	LUSELAND 27 DEC 2024	MOOSE JAW 15 DEC 2024	MOOSE MOUNTAIN P.P. 4 JAN 2025	MORSE 15 DEC 2024	NICOLLE FLATS 16 DEC 2024	NIPAWIN 24 DEC 2024
Shrew species													t						
Eastern Cottontail																			
Nuttall's Cottontail				3							5				1			t	
Snowshoe Hare		t			t		3	t	t				t					t	t
White-tailed Jack Rabbit		t		t	t	t				t	t		t	1	2		11	t	
Richardson's Ground Squirrel																	1		
Eastern Grey Squirrel																			
Eastern Fox Squirrel			2		4		5		1						24			t	
American Red Squirrel	5		11		1		17		2	1		5	24			3			8
Northern Flying-Squirrel																			
Northern Pocket Gopher																			
American Beaver			1	1					L						m				
Deer Mouse					t								t					t	
Muskrat									L									L	
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole																			
Meadow Vole					1								t						
Vole species				t															
Norway Rat																			
House Mouse											t								
Mouse species							1												
American Porcupine				3	1	1			1	t	1		t	1	m				t
Coyote	1	1	3	11	7	2	34	1	2		19		2	8	8		27	6	1
Gray Wolf										t			t						
Red Fox		4	2		t	1	1		1	t	c	1	t	1	3		5	1	t
Raccoon								t											
American Marten																			
Fisher																			
Ermine													t						
Least Weasel																			
Long-tailed Weasel								t					t					1	
Weasel species							2						t						
American Mink							1		t			1	1					t	
Wolverine												c							
American Badger			d					L	1						d				
Striped Skunk						c							1						
River Otter			1									6	t						
Bobcat													c						
Canada Lynx													t						t
Mule Deer	7	7	2			26	14	3	3		15			2	27		68	5	
White-tailed Deer		2	32	3	12	31	65	c	14	5	8		34		8		149	25	12
Deer species																			
Moose					t			t	t				t				c	1	
Elk													t						
Pronghorn											c				8		30		
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	13	14	54	21	26	61	143	4	25	6	48	13	62	13	81	3	291	39	21
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	3	4	8	5	6	5	10	2	8	2	5	4	5	5	8	1	7	6	3
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	0	2	0	2	5	1	0	4	3	4	2	0	15	0	0	0	0	6	4
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	3	6	9	7	11	7	10	8	13	6	9	5	21	5	11	1	8	13	7

SPECIES	OUTLOOK 5 JAN 2025	PIKE LAKE 1 JAN 2025	PRINCEALBERT 15 DEC 2024	QU'APPELLE 27 DEC 2024	QU'APPELLE DAM 15 DEC 2024	REDBERRY LAKE 28 DEC 2024	REGINA 28 DEC 2024	ROSCOMMON S.D. 5 JAN 2025	ROSETOWN 23 DEC 2024	ROSTERN 4 JAN 2024	ROULEAU 30 DEC 2024	SALT COATS 18 DEC 2024	SASKLANDING P.P. 30 DEC 2024	SASK RIVER FORKS 29 DEC 2024	SASKATOON 26 DEC 2024	SHAMROCK 3 JAN 2025	SHELL LAKE 2 JAN 2025	SOUTH LADY LAKE 21 DEC 2024	SPINNEY HILL 27 DEC 2024
Shrew species		t													t				
Eastern Cottontail																			
Nuttall's Cottontail					1								2						
Snowshoe Hare		t	t	t		2	t	t		1	2				t			t	
White-tailed Jack Rabbit		t	1	4			63	3	t		10		2		2	1		t	
Richardson's Ground Squirrel																			
Eastern Grey Squirrel							2												
Eastern Fox Squirrel	3			4	1		127	2											
American Red Squirrel		10	27	2	1	2		3		1				9	21		7	t	
Northern Flying-Squirrel		t																	
Northern Pocket Gopher								d											
American Beaver															t			L	
Deer Mouse		t		m											t				
Muskrat							1											L	
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole																			
Meadow Vole																			
Vole species															t				
Norway Rat								t											
House Mouse			t																
Mouse species								t		t			t		t				
American Porcupine		2	m	c	d	2		t		1					3			t	
Coyote		9	7	3	12	2	28	3	1	2			7	t	7		4	c	
Gray Wolf																		c	
Red Fox		1	c		6	2	2	2	1				8	2	3	2	1		
Raccoon								t											
American Marten														t					
Fisher																			
Ermine				c				t										t	
Least Weasel															1				
Long-tailed Weasel				1															
Weasel species		t																	
American Mink															t				
Wolverine																			
American Badger			d	1				d	d	t	1					d			
Striped Skunk			s					t											
River Otter																			
Bobcat																			
Canada Lynx																			
Mule Deer	1	6	6	8	12	1	1	3	4	30	4		4		2	21		17	
White-tailed Deer		42	19	19	2	3	4	6	1	1	10	1	18	4	10	5	6	9	
Deers species															4				
Moose		t	1	2	1	5		4				2	t		2		6	8	
Elk								5										t	
Pronghorn					56														
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	4	70	61	44	92	19	228	31	7	36	27	3	41	15	55	29	24	34	0
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	2	6	6	9	9	8	8	9	4	6	5	2	6	3	9	4	5	3	0
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	0	7	2	1	0	0	1	7	1	2	0	0	2	2	6	0	0	6	0
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	2	13	12	13	10	8	9	18	6	8	5	2	8	5	15	5	5	13	0

SPECIES	SWIFT CURRENT 14 DEC 2024	THICKWOOD-SPIRITWOOD 3 JAN 2025	TISDALE 31 DEC 2024	TORCH RIVER VALLEY 22 DEC 2024	TURTLE-FORD 22 DEC 2024	VAL MARIE 16 DEC 2024	WEYBURN 27 DEC 2024	WHITE BEAR 28 JAN 2024	WINGARD 5 JAN 2025	YORKTON 4 JAN 2025	# INDIVIDUALS SEEN/ HEARD COUNT DAY	# COUNTS SEEN/HEARD	# COUNTS RECORDED AS TRACKS	# COUNTS RECORDED AS OTHER	# COUNTS, COUNT PERIOD	# COUNTS, COUNT PERIOD & COUNT DAY
Shrew species					t						0	0	5	0	0	5
Eastern Cottontail											7	1	0	0	0	1
Nuttall's Cottontail	1							5			19	8	1	0	0	9
Snowshoe Hare				1						2	16	8	21	0	0	29
White-tailed Jack Rabbit	6	t	t			1		t		2	115	16	19	0	1	36
Richardson's Ground Squirrel								1			4	4	0	0	0	4
Eastern Grey Squirrel	37									7	46	3	0	0	0	3
Eastern Fox Squirrel							13			4	237	18	1	0	0	19
American Red Squirrel				8	1				2	3	209	31	2	0	2	35
Northern Flying-Squirrel											1	1	1	0	0	2
Northern Pocket Gopher											0	0	0	1	0	1
American Beaver		L			L						2	2	1	7	0	10
Deer Mouse					t			1			1	1	7	1	2	11
Muskrat					L		1				2	2	0	5	0	7
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole											1	1	0	0	1	2
Meadow Vole					t			t			1	1	3	0	0	4
Vole species		t		t							0	0	5	0	0	5
Norway Rat											0	0	1	0	0	1
House Mouse											0	0	3	0	0	3
Mouse species				t							1	1	7	0	0	8
American Porcupine	1			t							28	18	6	3	1	28
Coyote	3	1		t	1	2	4	8		1	278	45	4	0	2	51
Gray Wolf				1							5	3	2	0	1	6
Red Fox		1		1	1		4	3		2	81	33	9	0	2	44
Raccoon											0	0	2	0	0	2
American Marten											0	0	1	0	2	3
Fisher					t						1	1	2	0	0	3
Ermine				t							1	1	5	0	1	7
Least Weasel											1	1	0	0	0	1
Long-tailed Weasel				t							3	3	4	0	0	7
Weasel species										t	2	1	6	0	1	8
American Mink											4	4	3	0	1	8
Wolverine											0	0	0	0	1	1
American Badger	d										4	4	1	8	0	13
Striped Skunk				1							3	3	1	1	1	6
River Otter											8	3	3	0	0	6
Bobcat											0	0	0	0	1	1
Canada Lynx				t							0	0	5	0	0	5
Mule Deer	21				16	34	2				530	43	0	0	1	44
White-tailed Deer	93	5	m	15			26	17		9	1089	52	1	1	2	56
Deer species											27	3	0	0	0	3
Moose		t		t	8		4				56	17	9	0	3	29
Elk				28	t						42	3	3	0	3	9
Pronghorn								33			327	5	0	0	1	6
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	162	7	0	55	27	37	54	68	2	30	3152					
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	7	3	0	7	5	3	7	7	1	8		33				
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	0	3	1	7	5	0	0	2	0	1			29			
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0				8		
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					20	
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	8	7	2	14	12	3	7	9	1	9						40