



SUMMER 2025 VOLUME 83.2

BLUE JAY





5

Fraser Hunter shares his observations of American Avocets on Pilot Butte Creek in east Regina during the spring of 2024 — his first sighting of the species on this creek in the more than 40 years he has lived near the location.



6

In 2024, Nature Saskatchewan, along with the Canadian Wildlife Service and many other partners and volunteers, conducted a Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.



9

The results of the 83rd annual Saskatchewan Christmas Bird Count are in! While the number of counts conducted was down from the previous two years, the number of birds counted was nearly identical to last year. In addition, one new species was recorded.



21

Of the 71 Christmas Bird Counts conducted last winter, almost all were accompanied by a Mammal Count. There were, however, 14 fewer counts than the previous year. Despite the loss in coverage, more mammals were counted.



26

Naturalist Deanna Dodgson describes oviposition in *Sphagniana sphagnorum*, a native shield-backed katydid. Encountered in dry Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*) forest, females were observed laying eggs in sandy soil.



30

Each summer, Nature Saskatchewan's Stewards of Saskatchewan staff connect with land stewards, survey for species at risk, and promote awareness of our disappearing prairie parkland landscapes. Meet the summer staff who support this work!

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Lorne Fitch, P. Biol.

Human Nature: Prairie Conservation Is A Team Effort

Nathaniel Hak

Mystery Photo

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lorne Scott

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Sixty years ago this fall, I became aware of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, took out a membership and began receiving the *Blue Jay*. I read and re-read the first copies as I learned that other people had the same interest in nature and conservation as I did. I met and was mentored by many wonderful naturalists who shared their knowledge and offered encouragement. Sadly, the vast majority of these acquaintances have passed on and, in a reality check, I realize that I am now one of these old timers.

As I reflect on the decades and have witnessed how Nature Saskatchewan has grown, I see how we have become the voice for nature in our great province. We are consistently sought out by the media for comments on issues about wildlife and conservation. We have led campaigns for the creation of Grasslands National Park, Species at Risk programs, retention of Crown lands, a Wetlands Conservation Policy and, most importantly, partnerships with landowners who appreciate and are willing to work with us on preserving natural areas and species at risk. With 85 per cent of the land in southern Saskatchewan privately owned, the future of wildlife is in the hands of landowners.

For more than three decades, our Stewards of Saskatchewan staff have connected with landholders, building a relationship that is based on a shared respect for nature and an equal passion for conservation. Since the beginning of the Stewards of Saskatchewan program some 38 years ago, close to 1,200 landowners have voluntarily committed to conserving more than 1,032,000 acres of grassland habitat and 220 miles of shoreline habitat. What an accomplishment!

Another area that we have consistently excelled in is recruiting



ON THE FRONT COVER

This newborn White-tailed Deer was photographed when it was one day old, after having been born, along with its sibling, in a caragana row.

Photo credit: Randy McCulloch.



ON THE BACK COVER

A Burrowing Owl at its burrow in Grasslands National Park.

Photo credit: Nick Saunders.



Lorne Scott

strong, diverse and dedicated Board members with expertise in many areas — from science, finance, administrative, communications, landowners, researchers, etc. With the retirement of Jordan Ignatiuk, we welcome Peter Brown as our new Executive Director. Peter brings a varied background in organizations with strong administrative and governance skills. He worked for many years in agricultural banking mostly with government relations, product design and lending policy. Most recently, Peter spent time as the general manager at SaskMilk.

As this is my last message as the outgoing president of this great organization, I reflect upon our many accomplishments, changing priorities and challenges ahead. With our diverse leadership, dedicated staff, scientific credibility and trusted leadership, we will continue to be a voice for nature in Saskatchewan.

As just one example of the kind of people who have supported Nature Saskatchewan for their entire lives, Bill and Joyce Anaka from Good Spirit Lake, and more recently Yorkton, left Nature Saskatchewan a generous donation in their estate.

Thank you for your continued support in so many ways.

Blue Jay, founded in 1942 by Isabel M. Priestly, is a journal of natural history and conservation for Saskatchewan and adjacent regions. It is published quarterly by Nature Saskatchewan.

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AMERICAN AVOCETS NESTING IN EAST REGINA IN 2024

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On 30 April 2024, I observed an American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) on the shoreline of Pilot Butte Creek (PBC) in east Regina, SK (lat 50.4367 N/long -104.5480 W). This was my first sighting of an avocet on this creek in the 40-plus years that I have lived near the creek.

PBC has a fairly small drainage area but has significant water contributed by several city storm drains. The channel is only 5-10 m wide. After the spring freshet, the typical summer flow is sluggish and only 15-30 cm deep. The vegetation in the creek's channel and immediate riparian area are cleaned out every few years as the channel becomes obstructed with cattails (*Typha*) and other marsh vegetation. This vegetation removal process last took place in 2021 and the channel was still essentially vegetation-free in spring 2024.

The single avocet was observed in this location for several days but heavy rainfall in early May 2024 raised the creek's water level by 0.75-1 m and the avocet wasn't observed at this location again.

On 25 May 2024, while my grandson and I were cleaning up the east shoreline of PBC, about 200 m north of the earlier sightings, we encountered six adult avocets. They were aggressively guarding the shoreline with ground and aerial tactics. On subsequent visits to the area, the avocets continued to defend a 100-m long stretch of the creek. However, we neither observed nor searched for avocet nests. The avocets were peacefully co-existing with numerous Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and Gadjalls (*Anas strepera*), which were also using the creek in early June (Figure 1).

On the evening of 16 June, two avocet chicks were observed on the west shoreline of the creek (Figure 2). They appeared to be one-to-two weeks old, and were active on the shoreline.



FIGURE 1. Two adult avocets guarding the shoreline of Pilot Butte Creek in May 2024.

As the chicks passed by ducks, the adult avocets actively harassed the ducks with aerial dives and, occasionally, physically struck the ducks from above. The ducks flew for a few metres but resettled on the water. It appeared from the ducks' muted reaction that this wasn't the first occurrence of this aerial and physical harassment.

The second half of June 2024 was quite wet and the significant rain event of 27-28 June brought the month's precipitation to above 100 mm. PBC responded with inundation of all the shoreline previously utilized by the avocet chicks. No avocets were observed on PBC after 26 June. Several questions arise:

- Did the significant water rise, following the 10 June rain event, flood out the other avocet nests or

was only one nest attempted by the three pairs of adult avocets?

- Did other chicks drown in early June or were they lost to a predator?
- What happened to the avocet chicks in late June — did they fledge, perish or move to another location?
- Did the narrow width of PBC contribute to the aggressive behaviour of the adults in protecting the avocet chicks?

It will be interesting to see if the avocets return to this nesting area in Spring 2025. I hope so, as this was a truly unique birding experience.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the many positive suggestions that were made by the reviewers of this paper.



FIGURE 2. An adult avocet and two chicks on Pilot Butte Creek.

2024 PRAIRIE CANADA PIPING PLOVER CENSUS: SASKATCHEWAN RESULTS

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Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melanotos*) are small migratory shorebirds that have been listed as endangered since the original designation in 1985.¹ The first International Piping Plover Census (IPPC), a concerted effort to count all Piping Plovers in Canada, the USA, Mexico, and the Caribbean, was conducted in 1991.² Nature Saskatchewan coordinated the Saskatchewan portion of the IPPC, which took place once every five years until and including 2016. The IPPC did not take place in 2021, due to COVID-19, and it is uncertain if it will be continued in the future. In 2024, Nature Saskatchewan, in partnership with the Canadian Wildlife Service and many partners and volunteers, conducted a Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census (PCPPC) across Alberta (AB), Saskatchewan (SK), and Manitoba (MB).

The goal of the 2024 PCPPC was to survey all breeding habitat known to be either currently or recently suitable for Piping Plovers in order to count all adult birds. To ensure comparable results, surveys followed the same methods used in all past IPPCs. Breeding pairs and unpaired adults were counted across AB, SK and MB, from 27 May to 16 June 2024. This survey window was chosen to repeat similar past IPPC windows, and to maximize overlap with incubating plovers.

In SK, 174 basins (Figure 1) were selected for surveys based on previous Piping Plover occurrences or potential suitable habitat. A total of 127 surveyors, involving 1,116 person-hours of effort, covered all suitable and sub-suitable Piping Plover habitat (sandy/gravelly beaches and shorelines) at each basin as thoroughly as possible. Nearly all basins were surveyed by foot, with a few surveyed by boat. All landholders whose property needed to be crossed to reach

the shoreline were contacted for access permission. Results regarding the number and breeding status of birds, location, survey conditions, habitat, threats, and presence of leg bands were recorded on individual datasheets or submitted through a digital data collection application (Survey123).

In SK, a total of 810 individual Piping Plover adults (including 244 pairs) were observed on 57 of the 174 surveyed basins. The highest density of Piping Plovers was in the southcentral/Missouri Coteau region (Figure 2) with 62 per cent (502) observed across only four basins: Lake Diefenbaker, Chaplin Lake, Willow Bunch Lake, and Reed Lake; with Lake Diefenbaker containing 34 per cent of the entire Prairie Canada population. Use of the lake by 91 pairs and 305 birds is even higher than during the 2016 census (80 pairs and 207 birds) and much higher than the all-time low of seven pairs and 21 birds in 2011.^{3,4}

The 2011 count is an anomaly as the other international censuses have yielded at least 28 pairs and 75 birds.

Although still supporting a large majority of the population, Chaplin Lake was at an all-time low this year with 91

birds (highest count was 359 in 2011 and lowest count was 105 in 2001), while Reed Lake was at an all-time high of 40 birds, almost doubling its previous record high of 21 birds.^{4,5,6} Willow Bunch Lake supported 66 adults, which was higher than its lowest recorded count of eight in the previous census, but only about half of its record high of 124 birds in 1996.^{3,7}

Altogether, 37 basins had a higher result than the previous census, while 34 basins had a lower result. Fourteen basins recorded all-time lows, including typically higher-count basins of Chaplin, Frederick, Horizon, Big Muddy, East Coteau, West Reflex, and Aroma Lakes; while three basins — Big Quill Lake, Fife Lake, and Redberry Lake — that historically held a larger number of Piping Plovers (435, 53, and 21 respectively)^{2,7} again had no plover presence.

At Lake Diefenbaker, three pairs included in the results were counted outside of the census window (on 17 and 21 June) after the initial survey had taken place under poor survey conditions due to extremely high winds. In addition, three basins considered surveyed with no resulting plovers were checked outside

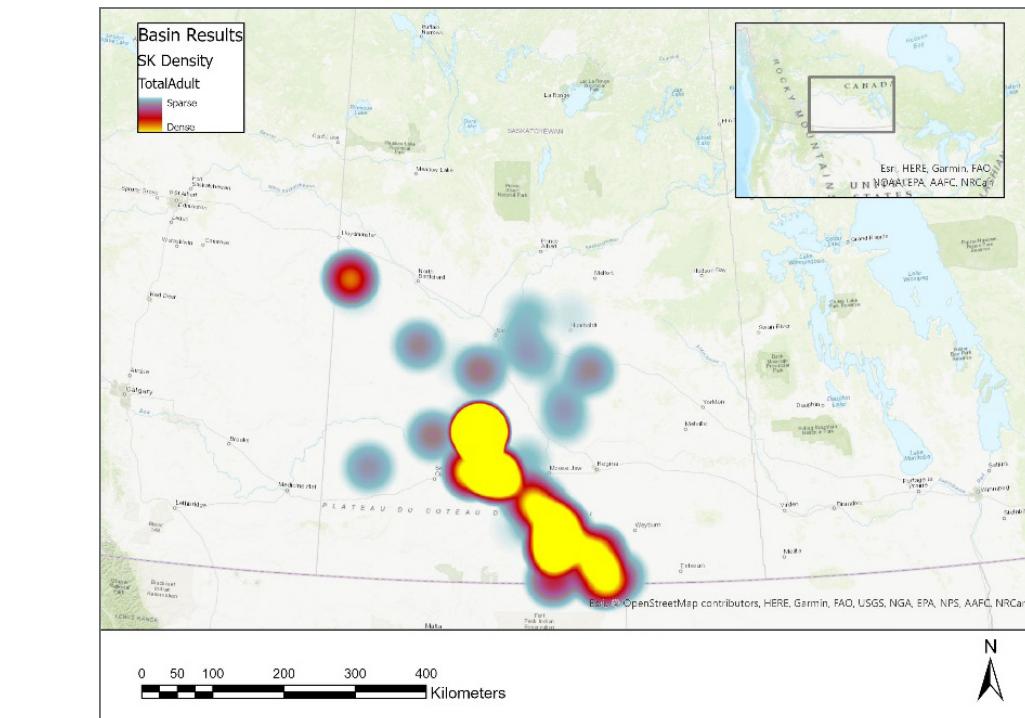


FIGURE 2. Density of Piping Plovers observed in Saskatchewan during the 2024 Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census.

the survey window. Redberry Lake was surveyed on 18 June with no Piping Plovers observed. Middle and Miller Lakes were checked within a week and a half prior to the census window and were confirmed to have no habitat, as the basins were flooded, so they were not revisited during the census window.

At the basin level, the most common threat category listed in Saskatchewan was livestock (with 50 per cent of the basins reporting this threat category), followed by predators (41 per cent), and vegetation encroachment (36 per cent). Less common threats were vehicles (13 per cent), industry (nine per cent), and buildings (five per cent). Approximately 10 per cent of the basins were reported as having no real threats, while 11 per cent of the basins had threats that were lumped into an “other” category and were described as recreation-related threats such as firepits, windsurfers, park development, traffic, noise, and garbage. One basin can have multiple data submissions (e.g. multiple surveyors covering different sections, or one surveyor over more than one day); thus, a single basin can have the same threat listed multiple times. In terms of relative abundance, predators, vegetation encroachment, and livestock all made up approximately 25 per cent each of the total threats reported (Figure 3).

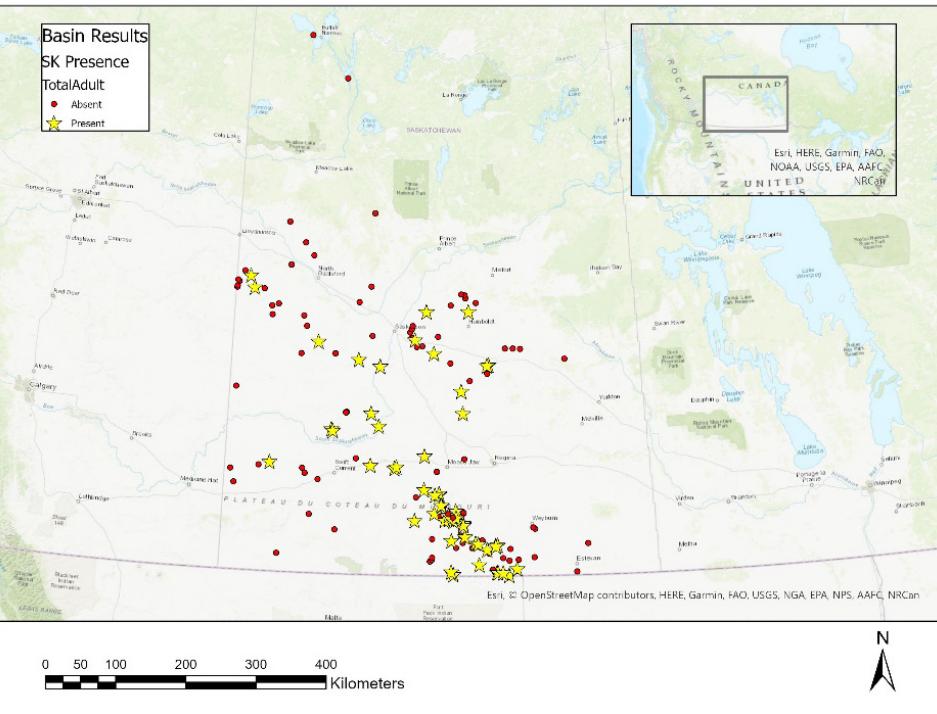


FIGURE 1. Piping Plover presence or absence at surveyed basins in Saskatchewan during the 2024 Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census.

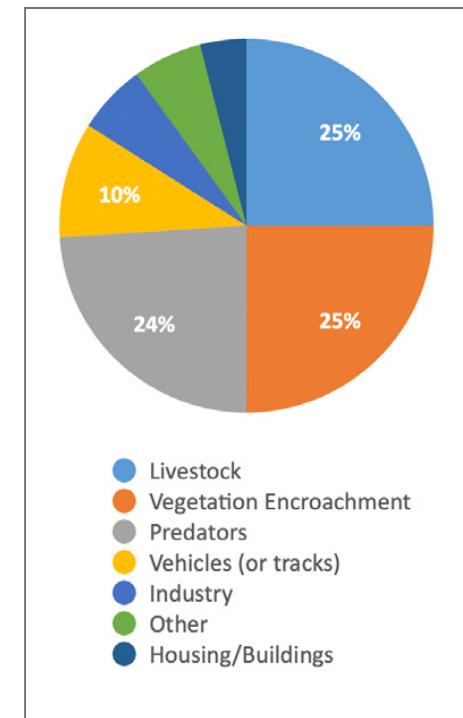


FIGURE 3. Relative abundance (%) of threats reported during surveys in the 2024 Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census.

Piping Plover habitat, such as increased education and awareness of Piping Plovers and their habitat requirements, ensuring implementation of wetland conservation policies, and maintaining financial support for stewardship actions that mitigate negative effects of livestock on Piping Plover habitat.

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We would like to thank all individuals and organizations who made this project possible, including the core committee from the Prairie Piping Plover Recovery team that gave input and contributed to all phases of this project, and the agencies and organizations that contributed financial, in-kind, or logistic support: Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Bird Studies Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada - Canadian Wildlife Service, Heather Peat Hamm, Manitoba Wildlife, Fisheries, and Resource Enforcement, Manitoba Piping Plover Recovery Program, Nature Conservancy of Canada - Saskatchewan Region, Nature Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment and Conservation Data Centre, SaskEnergy, SaskPower, and W3M Environmental.

A census of this enormity would not be possible without the many volunteer surveyors. Thank you to all of our surveyors: Ifrah Abdirizak, Ajith Aeilias, Maizie Anderson, Justine Anklam, Braden Arsenault, Shaylee Baglole, Amy Bailey, Liam Banga, Sydney Bast, Deirdre Bateson, Natalia Bidulka, Jayden Bisschop, Levi Boutin, Sarah Bradley, Danica Braithwaite, Haley Brauner, Bill Bristol, Aleksandra Bugajski, Michael Burak, Sara Burns, Kaytlyn Burrows, Meagan Butler, Sonia Cabezas, Wes Carter, Prajwal Chaudhari, Kelsi Christopher, Katie Chychrun, Brett Clavelle, Daniel Clement, Jessica Colville, John Conkin, Katherine Conkin, Medea Curteanu, Sourav Das, Chris Downie, Kiel Drake, Faline Drummond, Alex Fisher, Tory Frankl, Luke Frick, Jenny Gadd, Mike Collup, Alexa Graham, Ethan Gross, Jordin Gudmundson, Tara Haas, Nathaniel Hak, Jeff Harder, Val Harris, Cameron Hoggarth, Jordan Ignatiuk, Arnold Janz, Jeryn Janz, Tanya Johnston, Brianne Jonsson, Tysen Jordison, Jamie Kalla, Jesus Karst, Colleen Kay, Dylan Kent, Eli Klassen, Denah Kletchko, Chloe Krivoshen, Rachael LaFrance, Sheila Lamont, Leanne Latremouille, Quinn Lee, Connie Lietz, Sarah Ludlow, Katelyn Luff, Stella Ma, Kyle Mackenzie, Becky Magnus, Rita Marcinowski, Kat Mccallum, Dave McDonald, Janine McManus, Katherine Mehl, Brandon Melnechenko, Jennifer Melnik, Ferg Moore, Lindsay Morin, Janelle Moskalyk, Shannon Munroe, Steve Nadworny, Zaiden Osicki, Shreya Palejkar, Jeff Patterson, Heather Peat Hamm, Jeanette Pepper, Claire Peters, Grace Pidborschynski, Laura Poppy, Luc Prefontaine, Bea Prieto, Emily Putz, Jorin Raccio, Amanda Rezanoff, Vic Ritchie, Lindsay Roach, Gavin Robertson, Ashley Sahulka, Pablo Sanchez, Jeff Sereda, Lorrie Sielski, Allison Siemens Worsley, Tehlu Singh, Logan Sitter, Selina Siwy, Ashely Skoric, Anja Sorensen, Kim Sowa, Teresa Stangby, Erin Swerdfegger, Gillian Turney, Andrew Urzada, Sophia Utterhagen, Mateo Vargas, Ashley Vass, Vanessa Wagner, Robert Wapple, Mark Wayland, Richard Wiacek, Brianna Wilcox, Nicky Winn, Megan Zak, and Dan Zazelenchuck.

Finally, a huge thank you to all the landholders who allowed surveyors to access basins through their properties. It truly takes a community!



FIGURE 4. Piping Plover observed at Lake Diefenbaker during the 2024 PCPPC, originally banded at the same basin in 2012; photograph taken by Evan Larson.

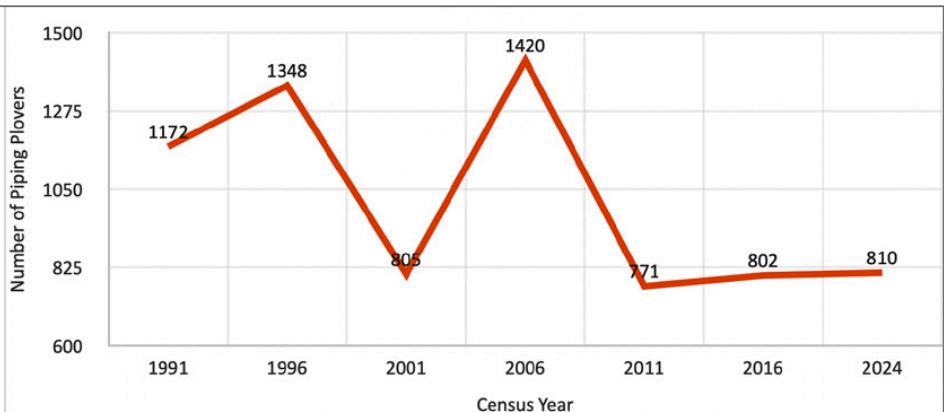


FIGURE 5. Comparison of Saskatchewan region census results from all IPPCs (1991-2016) and the 2024 Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census.^{2,3,4,5,6,7}

1. COSEWIC (2013) COSEWIC assessment and status report on the Piping Plover *Charadrius melanotos* circumcinctus subspecies (*Charadrius melanotos circumcinctus*) and the *melodus* subspecies (*Charadrius melanotos melodus*) in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. xiv + 39 pp. (Species at Risk Public Registry website).
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3. Elliott-Smith E, Dlabola E, Anderson A, Bidwell M, Hofer C, Sandoval G (2016) Data from the 2016 International Piping Plover Breeding Census. U.S. Geological Survey, unpublished data.
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83RD ANNUAL SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - 2024

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The counts

The total of 71 counts conducted this past winter was down by a shocking 12 compared to the previous two winters. Although difficult to explain, there are probably several reasons for this. These include the loss of observers due to an aging demographic and ongoing population movement to larger urban centres. In addition, the 2024-25 weather was especially nasty. Hopefully the number of counts rebounds next year.

The weather

Average minimum and maximum temperatures for the count period (with 2023-24 records in brackets) were -14 to -10 °C (-7 to -1 °C), wind speeds 6 to 16 km/h (7 to 14 km/h), and snow depths 16 to 37 cm (1 to 5 cm).

Weather conditions were thus on average much colder compared to the previous winter. Snow depths were also way up. These conditions had a significant impact on the numbers of birds and mammals recorded.

The birds

The 167,612 birds counted this past winter was almost identical to last year's 167,411. The total number of species at 91, and number of species per count at 18.8, were both lower than last year with respective numbers of 106 and 19.3.

Gardiner Dam had the most species on count day with 43; Regina came in second with 42 species.

Population trends

Waterfowl were found in the usual variety and overall numbers. There were, however, some population shifts: Canada Goose decreased from last year's 82,882 to 56,881, Cackling Goose from 2,577 to only 28. Mallards, however, increased from 8,016 to 23,382 birds.

Gray Partridge rebounded convincingly from 2,014 in winter of 2023-24 to 16,992 this last winter, and Sharp-tailed Grouse

from 1,600 to 4,051. These changes are likely due high reproduction which combined with the heavy snow cover to force birds to roadsides, farmsteads and towns where they were more visible.

Boreal forest owls, which were nearly absent from the forest fringe last year, staged an incursion into the fringe and beyond. Great Gray Owls led with 24 birds on 14 counts, followed by Northern Hawk Owls with five birds on five counts, and Boreal Owls with four birds on four counts (all including count period). Great Gray and Boreal owls occurred for the first time ever in the extreme southeast on the Estevan count.

Results for the finches were mixed. Numbers of the Redpoll decreased from 6,576 to 1,210. White-winged Crossbills were widespread with 886 birds on 29 counts. In contrast, Red Crossbills were very scarce with only 17 birds in two localities (Table 4).

New species

One new species, a Sage Thrasher, was recorded on the Regina count. This brings the all-time number of species recorded on the Christmas Bird Count to a remarkable 198. Note that we lost a species as the Common and Hoary Redpolls are now considered one species: the Redpoll.

Other rarities

The only other rarity of note was a Red-bellied Woodpecker on the Dundurn count — the 10th provincial CBC record (Table 6).

Note

For purposes of Saskatchewan Counts, as published herein, the count period extends from 14 Dec to 5 January; Audubon counts include only those species recorded three days prior to and after the count day.

Count areas and participants

(names of compilers are in italics)

1. ARCHERWILL. Sharron Carlson, Sharon Head, Gerald Hiron, Susan Hiron, Audrey Hnetka, Perry Hnetka, *Elaine Hughes*, Dorothy Klettberg, Willie Klettberg, Annette Kozak, Judy Revoy.

2. AVONLEA. Dave Holland, Michelle Howse, *Alan Smith*, Tanner Stevens, Graham Thomson (count period).

3. BALGONIE. Joel Cherry, Jared Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Teal Clarke, Ken Feltin, Mary Field, Dale Hjertaas, Uhryna Korin, Carmen Liebel, Kristen Martin, Annie McLeod, *Brett Quiring*, Dan Sawatzky, Brian Sterenberg, Doreen Yurkoski.

4. BIGGAR. Dale Booth, Mary-Jo Danychuk, Sheila Jezowski, Margie Newton, Murray Newton, Lorne Sutherland, *Guy Wapple*, Rob Wapple.

5. BORDEN-RADISSON. Greg Fenty, *Kyron Giroux*, Ron Jensen, Nick Saunders.

6. BROADVIEW. Doug Boivin, Debbie Johnson, Glen Johnson, Wes Kemp, Gail Saleski, Ron Saleski, Barb Weidl, *Don Weidl*.

7. CANDLE LAKE. Doug Braaten, Marie Braaten, Nolan Hoggarth, Gwen Klebeck, Merle Klebeck, John Lundgren, Ellen MacNeill, Laura Messer, *Vicki St. Germaine*, Warren St. Germaine.

8. CARLYLE. *Kathy Hedegard*, Gordon Paulley, Sharlane Toole.

9. CLARK'S CROSSING. Bruce Acton, Jake Buhler, Kiel Drake, Shelly Fisher, David Forbes, Marilyn Haskins, Ron Jensen, Ethan Joyce, LeeAnn Latremouille, Katelyn Luff, Brian McGill, *John Patterson* (non-participating compiler), Jan Shadick, Stan Shadick, Marten Stoffel, Diane Wells, Jim Wells, Miranda Yarnton, Dianne Young.

10. CRAVEN. Hiroyuki Aoki, Brian Armstrong, Jessie Bainbridge, Joel Cherry, Jared Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Stephen Davis, Ian Fallas, Rachel Fallas, Mary Field, Ryan Fisher, Kristen Martin, Jaret McDonald, Annie McLeod, Barry Mitschke, Janet Ng, Dave Phillips, *Brett Quiring*, Eileen Ramirez-Hughes, Dan Sawatzky, Jeannette Taylor, Robb Taylor, Lorna Tyler, Doreen Yurkoski.

11. CROOKED LAKE. Wes Kemp, *Don Weidl*.

12. CROOKED RIVER. Allison Flaman, David Flaman, Arnold Harpham, Marie Harpham, Sharon Kapeller, Tony Kapeller, Katherine Mehler, *Margaret Mehler*.

13. CYPRESS HILLS PROVINCIAL PARK (Centre Block). Jacquie Bolton, Cameron Cox, Chelsea Cox, Will Cox, Dwight Dobson, Nancy Dobson, David Larson, Margaret Larson, Mimi Martin, *Melody Nagel-Hisey*, Eowyn Schwartz, Mary Anne Schwartz.

14. DENHOLM. Beverly Beland, Gerard Beland, Linda Beland, *Orval Beland*, Janice Mazurek.

15. DORINTOSH. *Vicky Pryor*, Joe Twidale, Lorraine Twidale, Tim Wahl.

16. DUNDURN. Dale Booth, *Ron Jensen*, Jen Makowski, Guy Wapple.

17. EASTEND. Lorraine Armstrong, Roxy Binkley, Kevin Bristow, *Robert Gebhardt*, Melanie Grimster, Oscar Grimster, Debra Haas, Sandy Hagen, June Higgins, Harvey Johnson, Catherine Muhr, Kim Redlin, Lorne Scott, Heidi Topham, Eldon Whig.

18. E. B. CAMPBELL DAM. *Bert Dalziel*, Joan Dalziel, Sara Dalziel, Shawn Paschke, Mitch Simon, Stacie Simon, Bill Weighill, Clara Weighill.

19. ESTEVAN. Barry Dies, Marilyn Dies, Kathy Hedegard, Kathy Kazakoff, Gary Leslie, Anne Monroe, Craig Palmer, Kevin Perkins, Sharlane Toole, *Guy Wapple* (non-participating compiler).

20. ESTUARY NORTH. Cathy Cocks, *Dean Francis*, Fran Francis.

21. FENTON. John Lundgren, Ellen MacNeill, *Vicki St. Germaine* (non-participating compiler).

22. FLORAL. Dale Booth, Roberta Delawski, Monique Mayer, Neils Mayer, *Guy Wapple*.

23. FORT QU'APPELLE. Jean Ashcroft, Pete Ashcroft, Mark Geremia, Al Kirkley, Tom McDougall, Alan Mlazgar, Wendy Paquin, *Keith Stephens*, Kim Stephens, Ted Stevenson, Colette Stushnoff, Richard Stushnoff, Dave Sutherland.

24. GARDINER DAM. Dale Booth, Ryan Dudrane, Greg Fenty, Ron Jensen, Stan Shadick, Marten Stoffel, Phil Taylor, *Guy Wapple*, Robert Wapple.

25. GRENFELL. Wes Kemp, Ethel Rieger, Barb Weidl, *Don Weidl*.

26. HARRIS. Dale Booth, Bruce Trapp, *Guy Wapple*, Rob Wapple.

27. HUDSON BAY. Mo Alain, Judy Block, *John Daisley*, Rosalie Daisley, Marilyn Eckert, Agnes Lewellin, Peter Lewellin, Gloria Stang.

28. INDIAN HEAD. Camille Dufour, *Irvin Escott*, David Gehl, Roberta Gehl, Jim Jinks, Linda Jinks, Erin Lamb, Joni Lamb, Kyle MacIntock, Bruce Neill, Dora Nichols, Laura Poppy, Jamie Rudack, Ruthanne Rudack, Erica Schuurmans, Brian Scott, Lorne Scott, Myrna Scott, Chris Skinner, Fred Skinner, Don Stoffregen, Andrea Tait, Joanne Wilson, John Wilson.

29. KENASTON. *P. Lawrence Beckie*.

30. KENOSEE LAKE. Susan Burgess, *Blain Hjertaas*, Dale Hjertaas, Naomi Hjertaas.

31. KILWINNING. *Ed Driver*.

32. KYLE. Greg Nelson, Yvonne Nelson, Marten Stoffel, Ken Waldner, *Dan Zazelenchuk*.

33. LA RONGE. Sharon Feschuk, Linda Mikolayenko, Peter Mizanski, Ragnar Robinson, Sid Robinson, *John Schisler*, Brian Ulrikson, Lori Ulrikson.

34. LOVE - TORCH RIVER. *Bert Dalziel*, Joan Dalziel, Sara Dalziel, Scott Edwards, Janice Evans, Neal Evans, Harold Fisher, Valerie Fisher, Roseanne Kirkpatrick, Ron Knutson, Terri Knudson, Susan Kreutzweiser, Duane Kurbis, Renee Kurbis, Eilene L'Heureux, Shawn Paschke, Reg Petrichuk, Audrey Schrader, Eric Schrader, Leonard Turtle.

35. LUSELAND. Estelle Finley, *Kim Finley*, Liam Finley, Brent Honeker.

36. MOOSEJAW. Stuart Anderson, Joel Cherry, *Jeff Mander*, Annie McLeod, Richard Pickering, Pat Sterzuk.

37. MOOSE MOUNTAIN. Kathy Hedegard, Gordon Pauley, *Val Thomas*, Sharlane Toole.

38. MORSE. Larry Bonesky, Lorie Dean, Elizabeth Enns, Jon Enns, Noel Enns, Mike Francis, Dave Gardner, Roxanne Hagley, Randy McCulloch, Joel Priebe, Ken Priebe, *Myrna Priebe*, Shirley Robert, Krista Rutledge, Lori Wilson.

39. NICOLLE FLATS. David Donald, Sharlene Donauer, Elaine Ehman, Gail Fennel, *Dale Hjertaas*, Maureen Lee, Jeff Mander, Karen Mander.

40. NIPAWIN. Carol Blenkin, Inge Brown, Nancy Budd, Joyce Christiansen, Cindy Collopy, Mark Collopy, Bert Dalziel, Joan Dalziel, *Rick Douslin*, Patti Gaertner, Maureen Hagen, Wayne Hagen, Jeannette LeCuyer, Doug Phillips, Shirley Phillips, Luc Syrenne.

41. NORTH BATTLEFORD. *Susan Galvin*.

42. OUTLOOK. *Graham Thomson*.

43. PIKE LAKE. Dalice Abraham, Max Abraham, Dale Booth, Donna Bruce, Kiel Drake, Ryan Dudrane, Greg Fenty, Jennifer Fenty, Leif Friggstad, Jude Haraldson, Irene Howe, Rob Howe, Shirley Humphries, Greg Hutchings, Ron Jensen, Robert Johanson, LeeAnn Latremouille, Marilyn Leuty, Larry McGuire, Joe Monahan, Honda Olson, *John Patterson*, Marc Sabourin, Ljubica Stuglin, Stephan Stuglin, Phil Taylor, David Toomey, Guy Wapple, Bert Weichel.

44. PRINCE ALBERT. Doug Braaten, Marie Braaten, Alyson Ethier, Daniel Ethier, Harold Fisher, Valerie Fisher, Hamilton Greenwood, Estelle Hjertaas, Sandra Jewell, Gwen Klebeck, Axel Klenz, John Lundgren, Cassidy MacIntyre, Teddy McDougald, Laura Messett, Carl Nahachewsky, Rylan Parenteau, Gail Sackett, *Vicki St. Germaine*, Warren St. Germaine, Eldon Thorson, Gwen Thorson, Jeannie Walker.

45. QU'APPELLE. Peter Ashcroft, Melnie Beattie, Cory Bennett, Christine Blair, Jeannie DesRochers, Al Kirkley, *Colette Stushnoff*, Richard Stushnoff, Frank Veresh.

46. QU'APPELLE VALLEY DAM. *Bob Godwin*, Robert Johanson, Jan Shadick, Stan Shadick, Marten Stoffel, Bernie Volk.

47. REDBERRY LAKE. Shelly Balbar, *Mike Blom*, Jody Collier, Mary Collier, Zoey Collier, Lillian Donahue, Jenna Englot, Matt Englot, Laurent Gareau, Sandy Jasieniuk, Marten Stoffel.

48. REGINA. Ingrid Alesich, Brian Armstrong, Lionel Bonneville, Stephane Bonneville, Joel Cherry, Jared Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Teal Clarke, Gail Chin, Bruce Crouter, Elaine Elhman, Jim Elliott, Claudia Fallas, Eric Fallas, Ian Fallas, Rachel Fallas, Mary Field, Jill Forrester, Shirley Friel, Trevor Herriot, Margaret Hodges, Arnold James, Marie James, Sarah James, Ari Jacobsen, Michelle Jacobsen, Patti Kindred, Glen Lee, Maureen Lee, Sarah Ludlow, Bob Luterbach, Jeff Mander, Karen Mander, Lauren Mang, Kristen Martin, Annie McLeod, Tokiko Nakagawa, *Brett Quiring*, Brian Rainey, Ed Rodger, Dan Sawatzky, Brian Sterenberg.

49. ROSCOMMON S.D. Bernice Althouse, Jim Althouse, Kate Althouse, Kurt Althouse, Ruby Finnie, Penny Froh, Brian Irving, Sophie Jankowski, Joan Lillibo, *Dianne Sloan*.

50. ROSETOWN. Anonymous observer, *Ryan Dudrane*, Ryan Sparks, Sophia Sparks.

51. ROSTHERN. *Greg Bobbitt*, Dennis Helmuth, Loretta Helmuth, Brenda Kramarchuk, Luca Lamb.

52. ROULEAU. Stuart Anderson, Marla Childs, Lynn Kozack, Allen McGratten, Noreen McGratten, *Pat Sterzuk*, Rachel Wheat.

53. SALTCOATS. Arden Bradford, Donna Bradford, Len Cameron, Muriel Cameron, Brenda Croswell, Gail Gillard, Pam Hall, Terry Hall, Gerri Knudsen, Ron Knudsen, Glen Smith, Monique Smith, Randy Torrie, Bonnie Trowell, Mardell Trowell, Val Trowell, Earl Upshall, Verda Upshall, Rob Wilson.

54. SASKATCHEWAN LANDING PROVINCIAL PARK. Porter Hamilton, Sharon Nelson, Yvonne Nelson, Glen Pederson, Marten Stoffel, *Dan Zazelenchuk*.

55. SASKATCHEWAN RIVER FORKS. John Lundgren, Ellen McNeill, Laura Messett, *Vicki St. Germaine*, Warren St. Germaine.

56. SASKATOON. Alexander Acton, Britt Agrey, Carol Armstrong-Monahan, Sarah Bradley, Donna Bruce, Jennifer Burgess, Lauren Burgess, Liam Burgess, Geoffrey Carter, Kiel Drake, Melanie Elliott, Elisa Elizondo, Joan Feather, Greg Fenty, David Forbes, Stephanie Gauthier, Martin Gerard, Sylvia Gerard, Denise Giroux, Heather Giroux, Jade Giroux, Keith Giroux, Kyron Giroux, Tara Giroux, Mike Gollop, Raea Gooding, Kerry Hjertaas, Amanda Horvath, Anna Janzen, Jeff Jensen, Julie Jensen, Ron Jensen, Robert Johanson, Carson Kearns, Richard Kerbes, Shan Landry, Troy Lange, Helen Larsen-McKay, LeeAnn Latremouille, Don Loran, Janet Loran, Audrey MacKenzie, Bill MacKenzie, Valerie Martz, Blair McCann, Jane McPhee, Meghan Mickelson, Scott Mitchell, Joe Monahan, Dian Nowlan, *John Patterson*, Jim Paul, Arvid Pederson, Bill Robertson, Mary Anne Robin, Christian Roy, Marc Sabourin, Trish Santo, Nick Saunders, Kathlin Simpkins, Ruth Skinner, Marten Stoffel, Jenny Sutton, Phil Taylor, Brandon Wapple, Guy Wapple, Robert Wapple, Sandra Wapple, Hamish Watts, Olive Watts, Trent Watts, Dan Zazelenchuk, Norman Zlotkin.

57. SHAMROCK. Mike Francis, Joel Priebe, *Myrna Priebe*, Krista Rutledge, Lori Wilson.

58. SHELL LAKE. *Ryan Dudrane*, Ron Jensen, Nick Saunders.

59. SOUTH LADY LAKE. Bill Aykroyd, Adam Schmidt, *David Weiman*.

60. SPINNEY HILL. *Ed Driver*.

61. STONY RAPIDS. Alex Acton, Scott Cossette, *Shayna Cossette*.

62. SWIFT CURRENT. Jacquie Bolton, Stacy Bolton, Norris Currie, Laurent Dudrane, Mary Ann Dudrane, Ryan Dudrane, *Arnie Ens*, Lorna Fast, Sandra Fortman, Barb Fraser, Tana Fraser, Dave Gardner, Dave Green, Katie Hagman, Norma Hain, Hugh Henry, Leonard Howes, Dot Letkeman, Randy McCulloch, Janet Payne, June Roy, Shirley Rob, Ruby Sky (count period), Connie Sykes, David Tuttle, Lori Wilson,

63. THICKWOOD-SPIRITWOOD. Mavis Bellisle, Anna Froese, Jennifer Froese, Julia Froese, Kenneth Froese, Giles Lalonde, Carole Martin, Kay Willson, *Philip Willson*.

64. TISDALE. Allison Flaman, David Flaman, Katherine Mehler, Kris Mehler, *Margaret Mehler*.

65. TORCH RIVER VALLEY. Lorna Blaine, *Bert Dalziel*, Joan Dalziel, Sara Dalziel, Don Lidster, Nancy Lidster, Barry MacLeod, Deborah MacLeod, John Minty, Wanita Minty, Shawn Paschke.

66. TURTLEFORD. Pat Blais, Dan Corneliuson, Deb Corneliuson, Hank DeGraaf, Marlene DeGraaf, Miles Johnson, Rebecca Johnson, Vance Johnson, *Brent Keen*, Bonny MacNab, Gary MacNab, Diane Perkins, Stephanie Perkins, Richard Roney, Colin Rudolph, Marg Uhlig, Marilyn Whelan, Henry Woolf, Shirley Woolf.

67. VAL MARIE. *Nick Cairns* (non-participating compiler), Justin Crowe, Ian Mahon, Julia Put, Laurens Put, Colin Schmidt.

68. WEYBURN. Bob Cameron, Lucille Cameron, Millie Fleming, Chad Garling, Cindy Garling, Charlotte Payak, Don Payak, Goretti Pennington, Jim Pennington, Garnet Schultz, Linda Schultz, Tanis Thomas, *Val Thomas*.

69. WHITE BEAR. Dale Cates, Gary Jordheim, Sharon Nelson, Yvonne Nelson, *Dan Zazelenchuk*.

70. WINGARD. *Rebecca Beam*.

71. YORKTON. Coulter Barry, Warren Crossman, Debbie Davis, Bob Dech, Marilyn Ferguson, Joyce Gardner, Darryl Kawa, Jean Knoll, Paula Meier, Ken McCandas, Matt Mountain, Gloria Rathgeber, Dorothy Riesz, Ray Riesz, *Bonnie Rushowick*, Geoff Rushowick, James Rushowick, Dale Sharpe, Gaylene Skinner, Sharon Tonn.

TABLE 1. Weather and Snow Cover.

LOCALITY		MIN TEMP (°C)	MAX TEMP (°C)	MIN WIND (KM/HR)	MAX WIND (KM/HR)	MIN SNOW (CM)	MAX SNOW (CM)	SKY A.M.	SKY P.M.
Archerwill	18 Dec 2024	-33	-22	3	18	30	30	clear	cloudy
Avonlea	22 Dec 2024	-10	-6	0	20	20	40	partly cloudy	clear
Balganie	1 Jan 2025	-15	-15	8	24	20	50	cloudy	cloudy
Biggar	15 Dec 2024	-9	-7	15	30	10	30	partly cloudy	light fog
Borden-Radisson	20 Dec 2024	-18	-18	20	30	5	40	heavy snow	light snow
Broadview	22 Dec 2024	-14	-11	0	5	20	25	heavy fog	mostly clear
Candle Lake	5 Jan 2025	-21	-16	5	10	8	30	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Carlyle	30 Dec 2024	-13	-5	2	5	15	30	cloudy	cloudy
Clark's Crossing	14 Dec 2024	-15	-4	0	14	3	45	cloudy	cloudy
Craven	14 Dec 2024	-14	-5	23	30	15	30	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Crooked Lake	17 Dec 2024	-9	-8	15	20	10	15	overcast	overcast
Crooked River	30 Dec 2024	-8	-12	6	11			partly cloudy	overcast
Cypress Hills P.P.	30 Dec 2024	-8	-7	2	19	20	25	partly cloudy	moderate fog
Denholm	25 Dec 2024	-7	0	0	5	12	30	mostly clear	clear
Dorintosh	22 Dec 2024	-18	-9	0	0	10	25	mod. fog	mod. fog
Dundurn	19 Dec 2024	-26	-21	3	10	30	60	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Eastend	5 Jan 2025	-21		4				clear	clear
E.B.Campbell Dam	21 Dec 2024	-4	-4	0	15	30	50	overcast	overcast
Estevan	5 Jan 2025	-28	-19	10	20	10	20	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Estuary North	27 Dec 2024	-10		0		12		mostly clear	clear
Fenton	26 Dec 2024	-8	-4	5	10	7	25	cloudy	mostly clear
Floral	30 Dec 2024	-6	-4	15	25	10	30	overcast	overcast
Fort Qu'Appelle	14 Dec 2024	-10	-8	5	8	10	20	overcast	overcast
Gardiner Dam	16 Dec 2024	-10	-8	15	25	10	30	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Grenfell	2 Jan 2025	-26	-22	15	15	10	20	clear	partly cloudy
Harris	14 Dec 2024	-16	-6	0	5	10	30	cloudy	cloudy
Hudson Bay	28 Dec 2024	-6	-4	0	5	35	40	cloudy	cloudy
Indian Head	27 Dec 2024	-6	-1	0		50	50	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Kenaston	15 Dec 2024	-4	-2	0	10		30	partly cloudy	cloudy
Kenosee Lake	2 Jan 2025	-22	-17	10	15	20	20	clear	partly cloudy
Kilwinning	26 Dec 2024	-10	-8	5	25	2	60	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Kyle	31 Dec 2024	-11	-10	10	30	10	40	overcast	overcast
La Ronge	26 Dec 2024	-24	-20	4	13	30	30	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Love-Torch River	26 Dec 2024	-9	-5	0	5	20	35	partly cloudy	clear
Luseland	27 Dec 2024	-9	-2	2	5	4	27	mostly clear	mostly clear

LOCALITY	DATE	MIN TEMP (°C)	MAX TEMP (°C)	MIN WIND (KM/HR)	MAX WIND (KM/HR)	MIN SNOW (CM)	MAX SNOW (CM)	SKY A.M.	SKY P.M.
Moose Jaw	15 Dec 2024	-3	2	5	15	50	250	cloudy	cloudy
Moose Mountain	4 Jan 2025	-22	-21	12	19	12	16	clear	clear
Morse	15 Dec 2024	-3	1	7	21	20	36	overcast	partly cloudy
Nicolle Flats	16 Dec 2024	-9	-6	15	50	15	30	overcast	cloudy
Nipawin	24 Dec 2024	-28	-17	0	5	0	45	overcast	mostly clear
North Battleford	30 Dec 2024								
Outlook	5 Jan 2025	-17	-15	21	25	5	60	clear	
Pike Lake	4 Jan 2025	-33	-25	8	25	30	50	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Prince Albert	15 Dec 2024	-13	-9	4	22	5	30	cloudy	cloudy
Qu'Appelle	27 Dec 2024	-4	-1	5	15	30	50	light snow	light snow
Qu'Appelle Dam	15 Dec 2024	-9	-4	6	27	15	20	overcast	overcast
Redberry Lake	28 Dec 2024	-6	-2	6	29	8	30	cloudy	cloudy
Regina	28 Dec 2024	-6	-2	11	24	20	40	overcast	clear
Roscommon S.D.	5 Jan 2025	-23	-18	10	15	24	45	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Rosetown	2 Jan 2024	-22	-15	0	5	3	15	heavy fog	light fog
Rosthern	23 Dec 2025	-14	-10	0	3	5	35	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Rouleau	30 Dec 2024	-6	-3	0	5	30	60	cloudy	partly cloudy
Saltcoats	18 Dec 2024		-29	11	20	8	10	clear	mostly clear
Sask. Landing P.P.	30 Dec 2024	-4	-7	5	30	10	35	overcast	overcast
Sask. River Forks	29 Dec 2024	-4	-3	10	10	7	20	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Saskatoon	26 Dec 2024	-8	-4	10	18	15	40	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Shamrock	3 Jan 2025	-29	-27	5	7	25	40	mod. fog	mod. fog
Shell Lake	2 Jan 2025	-22	-21	10	15	10	25	light snow	partly cloudy
South Lady Lake	21 Dec 2024	-10	-6	11	15	50	72		
Spinney Hill	27 Dec 2024	-2	-2	0	5	10	70	heavy fog	
Stony Rapids	15 Dec 2024	-19	-17	11	28	31	61	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Swift Current	14 Dec 2024	-4	0	10	30	5	30	partly cloudy	cloudy
Thickwood-Spiritwood	3 Jan 2025	-35	-26	4	4	10	20	clear	clear
Tisdale	31 Dec 2024	-15	-12	2	11	30	45		overcast
Torch River Valley	22 Dec 2024	-10	-9	0	0	20	30	heavy fog	moderate fog
Turtleford	29 Dec 2024	-14	-2	0	5	0	1	clear	clear
Val Marie	16 Dec 2024	-7	-7	9	20	0	15		partly cloudy
Weyburn	27 Dec 2024	-5	-3	5	11	10	12	mostly clear	mostly clear
White Bear	28 Dec 2024	-11	-4	2	11	10	30	clear	clear
Wingard	5 Jan 2025								
Yorkton	4 Jan 2025	-32	-28	0				mostly clear	mostly clear

TABLE 2. Effort and Habitat Coverage (%). Wild Fruit: p=poor, f=fair, g=good, e=excellent.

LOCALITY	PARTICIPANTS	KM ON FOOT	HOURS ON FOOT	KM BY VEHICLE	HOURS BY VEHICLE	HOURS AT FEEDERS	EVERGREEN FOREST	MIXEDWOOD FOREST	DECIDUOUS FOREST	ASPEN GROVE/FARMLAND	ASPEN GROVE/PRAIRIE	NATIVE PRAIRIE	TAME PASTURE	FARMLAND	FARMSTEADS	URBAN	OPEN WATER	RIPARIAN	OTHER	WILD FRUIT CROP	
Archerwill	11	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0		25					50	25							p
Avonlea	4	0.0	0.0	90	4.0	0.5		0				5	10	40	5	35		5			p
Balganie	15	38.2	11.0	331	12.5	1.0				40			30		30						e
Biggar	8	5.0	5.5	477	16.0	3.0				12			60		7	21					p
Borden-Radisson	4	9.5	5.3	183	4.8	0.0															
Broadview	8	0.2	0.5	153	7.8	4.0		15	25		5	10	25	5	15						f
Candle Lake	10	0.0	0.0	203	13.0	0.0	15	30	20							25		5	5	p	
Carlyle	3	0.0	0.0	90	4.0						5	10	25		60						f
Clark's Crossing	18	24.0	9.5	457	28.2	2.0				15	5		40		5	25	1	4		f	
Craven	24	17.7	10.1	280	18.5	4.0				30			45		10	15				e	
Crooked Lake	2	0.5	0.5	107	4.5	0.3				20		5	30		5	30	10			p	
Crooked River	8	0.5	0.5		10.0	7.5															g
Cypress Hills P.P.	12	10.0	6.0	24	2.0	0.0	30	25	10		25		10								g
Denholm	5	0.0	0.0	235	7.5	1.0				20		5	70		2	3					f
Dorintosh	4	6.0	2.0	0	0.0	5.0	50	10									25	15		p	
Dundurn	4	3.0	1.5	120	5.5	3.0				15	15		60		10						p
Eastend	16			355	15.0	4.0															
E.B.Campbell Dam	8	2.0	1.3	131	8.8	5.0		50		20								10	20		f
Estevan	9	3.0	3.5	237	8.5	8.0						33		17	8	42					p
Estuary North	3	1.0	1.0	60	2.0	3.0		50		40			10								p
Fenton	2	0.0	0.0	160	5.0	0.0				20		69		10	1						f
Floral	5	2.0	2.3	185	6.0	3.0				30		46		6	18						p
Fort Qu'Appelle	13	0.0	0.0	611	20.0	0.0				25	20	10	20	4	20	1					f
Gardiner Dam	9	7.0	7.0	459	19.8	0.0					5		47	7	8	33					p
Grenfell	4	0.0	0.0	130	5.5	2.0				9		57		8	26						f
Harris	4	3.0	3.0	301	10.3	0.0				17		61		9	13						p
Hudson Bay	8	0.0	0.0	25	1.0	12.0		70				20							10		p
Indian Head	24	5.0	23.5	281	6.0	19.0	5			10			74	5	5	1					p
Kenaston	1	0.0	0.0	54	4.5	2.0						90		10							
Kenosee Lake	4	0.5	0.5	106	5.3	0.0		15				15		70							f
Kilwinning	1	0.2	0.2	140	7.4	0.0		15	70			10		5							
Kyle	5	2.5	2.0	280	12.0	0.0					5	10	40	20	20		5				p
La Ronge	8	2.0	2.0	88	6.0	9.5		60					5	30		5					g
Love-Torch River	20	6.5	2.8	327	14.5	20.5	10	15		50			5	10	10						f
Luseland	4	6.0	3.0	290	8.0	1.5				50	10	5	5	20	5	5					g

LOCALITY	PARTICIPANTS	KM ON FOOT	HOURS ON FOOT	KM BY VEHICLE	HOURS BY VEHICLE	HOURS AT FEEDERS	EVERGREEN FOREST	MIXEDWOOD FOREST	DECIDUOUS FOREST	ASPEN GROVE/FARMLAND	ASPEN GROVE/PRairie	NATIVE PRAIRIE	TAME PASTURE	FARMLAND	FARMSTEADS	URBAN	OPEN WATER	RIPARIAN	OTHER	WILD FRUIT CROP
Moose Jaw	6	8.5	4.1	220	10.8	0.0		10					5	40	5	30		10		p
Moose Mountain	4	0.0	0.0	92	5.0	0.0					15		10	50	5	15	5		f	
Morse	16	3.1	1.3	337	18.6	3.0							3	90	7				f	
Nicolle Flats	8	10.4	5.0	238	14.2	0.0			15	4	4	13	4	50	4	4	0	2	0	f
Nipawin	16	1.0	0.8	228	9.0	10.0	15	5		15			25	10	30				f	
North Battleford	1	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	1.5														
Outlook	1	0.0	1.0	10	1.0	0.0													f	
Pike Lake	31	15.0	10.7	408	19.2	18.5			15	15		10	15	5	40				f	
Prince Albert	23	26.0	13.0	476	25.5	1.0	15	10		50						23		2	f	
Qu'Appelle	9	5.0	2.0	329	11.1	17.0		5	5		15	5	10	25	10	20	5		p	
Qu'Appelle Dam	6	5.0	2.5	287	12.5	0.0			15	25	10		15			15	10	10	p	
Redberry Lake	11	6.0	4.0	365	15.0	4.0		10		90										
Regina	41	102.5	38.0	425	18.7	2.4				10				40		50			f	
Roscommon S.D.	10	0.0	0.0	92	3.5	36.0				20				60	20				p	
Rosetown	4	1.5	1.3	217	6.8	0.5						5	5	50	25	5		10	p	
Rosthern	5	10.0	3.0	208	7.0	0.0				15				60	5	20			f	
Rouleau	7	1.0	1.0	290	8.5	4.0				5				80	5	10			f	
Saltcoats	20	0.0	0.0	125	5.0	120.0					2	5	10	79	3		1		f	
Sask. Landing P.P.	6	3.0	3.0	330	16.0	0.0					10	10	40	20	10		10		p	
Sask. River Forks	5	0.0	0.0	215	9.5	0.0		15		10				75					f	
Saskatoon	71	103.0	52.9	842	63.8	32.1			5	10				5		75	1	4	f	
Shamrock	5	0.0	0.0	261	5.8	2.0							5	60	25	10			f	
Shell Lake	3	6.6	3	189	7.0	0.0	10	15	25	10			10	10		15		5	p	
South Lady Lake	3	2.0	2.0	113	12.0	0.0				35			5	50	10				p	
Spinney Hill	1	0.0	0.0	20	1.2	0.0	5			60	30	5							f	
Stony Rapids	3	0.0	0.0	30	3.2	1.8	50	35								10	5		f	
Swift Current	25	15.8	14.3	420	23.0	10.0								20	10	68		2	g	
Thickwood-Spiritwood	9	1.1	0.5	203	8.4	0.0	5	10		15			15	35	5	10		5	f	
Tisdale	5	0.0	0.0	30	4.0	0.0												e		
Torch River Valley	11	5.0	2.0	211	10.0	12.0		40		20				20	20				f	
Turtleford	19	12.0	5.0	360	9.0	10.0				45			50			5			f	
Val Marie	5	6.0	1.6	40	1.4	0.0					5	84					1	10		
Weyburn	13	0.0	0.0	134	8.0	17.0	5	20	5	5		5	10	30		15	5		f	
White Bear	5	3.0	2.0	287	15.0	0.0					5	5	50	40					p	
Wingard	1													5	95					
Yorkton	19				110	10.0	10.0			10			5			85			f	

TABLE 3. Species found on 5 or more counts; () = seen during Count Period (CP).

SPECIES	ARTHERWILL 18 DEC 2024	AVONLEA 22 DEC 2024	BALCONIE 1 JAN 2025	BIGCAR 15 DEC 2024	BORDEN-RADISSON 20 DEC 2024	BROADVIEW 22 DEC 2024	CANDLELAKE 1 JAN 2025	CARLYLE 30 DEC 2024	CLARK'S CROSSING 14 DEC 2024	CRAYVEN 14 DEC 2024	CROOKED LAKE 17 DEC 2024	CROOKED DRIVER 30 DEC 2024	CYPRESS HILLS P.P. 30 DEC 2024	DENHOLM 25 DEC 2024	DORINTOSH 22 DEC 2024	DUNDURN 19 DEC 2024	EASTEND 31 JAN 2025	E.B. CAMPBELL DAM 21 DEC 2024	ESTEVAN 5 JAN 2025	55000
Canada Goose																				
Mallard																				
Common Goldeneye																				
Common Merganser																				
Ruffed Grouse			1			1	2			1	1			(2)	2		3			
Sharp-tailed Grouse	10	25	100	308	16	158		2	89	66	12		11	17	28	92	(12)	33		
Gray Partridge		238	437	605	247	178		61	918	593	29	(8)	209		332	37	9	630		
Ring-necked Pheasant						(2)		10		1	(2)				20		378			
Rock Pigeon		361	213	215	87	39		265	250	165	32	4	104		13	50	1	608		
Eurasian Collared-Dove			1		2	12		1	3	13					74	55		56		
Rough-legged Hawk		1																(1)		
Golden Eagle		1			1					2	(1)			(1)		2				
Sharp-shinned Hawk								1						(1)						
American Goshawk				2		1			3											
Bald Eagle	2			3	1	4			1	2	1					4	8	2		
Snowy Owl		(2)		1		(1)							1			2				
Great Horned Owl				2	1	1			2				1		2	5		1		
Northern Hawk Owl																				
Great Gray Owl							1										1			
Downy Woodpecker	5	1	9	2	7	6	5		17	7	1	3	2	3	1	2	10		7	
Hairy Woodpecker	7	1	4		3	5	7		8	6		1	1	8	(1)	2		2		
Northern Flicker													1			1				
Pileated Woodpecker	(1)		1			(1)	4				(1)						(1)			
Merlin		(1)							1											
Gyrfalcon						(1)														
Prairie Falcon		(1)																		
Northern Shrike			1			1			3	1			1	1	1	1	1			
Canada Jay						23									2		5			
Blue Jay	12		5	5		2	23		15	10	9	1		2	5	1	3	7		
Black-billed Magpie	10	14	96	82	19	17	17	6	154	111	19	17	17	29	(1)	67	126	13	8	
American Crow																			2	
Common Raven	9	3	60	71	59	19	142	7	90	45	42	5	2	19	(1)	20	14	48	9	
Black-capped Chickadee	43	2	91	10	27	36	80		124	68	31	6	33	12	15	18	49	12	27	
Boreal Chickadee	2					22										1				
Horned Lark		17	50	42	22	3		3		1				1		43		6		
Golden-crowned Kinglet			1					2							2					
Bohemian Waxwing			89		14			123	(15)				40		40					
Red-breasted Nuthatch			29	6	3	1	14	1	12	5		8		(1)		7	3	1		
White-breasted Nuthatch	3		1		2	3		1	2	19	(2)			3	2			5		
European Starling		10		12	4	(8)		1	20			6		2						
American Robin						1			2	1			1	(1)						
House Sparrow	4	50	271	150	133	102		30	865	222	58	50	45	6		141	70	25	187	
Evening Grosbeak	11						34							18			21			
Pine Grosbeak	50					1	69				9		6	15		10	34			
House Finch		(22)	3	4	9	(19)		2	114	8						14		62		
Purple Finch							1													
Redpoll	15		28	76			78		10	55			(4)	12	20	14	34			
White-winged Crossbill			138	8		9	8	4	60	14						12				
Pine Siskin						1														
American Goldfinch						1	4													
Snow Bunting	50	300	209	891	283	80		335	182	137	70		25	42	(1)	140	486	286	59	
Dark-eyed Junco	3		3			(2)		2	1	7			0	6	5	1	0	13	12	
TOTAL BIRDS COUNT DAY	238	1024	1857	2495	942	685	531	731	3150	1562	331	102	146	503	73	906	1161	744	77627	
TOTAL BIRDS ONLY IN CP	1	27	0	0	0	36	0	0	1	15	6	8	0	10	5	1	0	13	11	
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	17	14	25	20	22	25	18	16	31	27	17	10	11	18	9	19	24	22	27	
TOTAL SPECIES ONLY IN CP	1	5	0	0	0	9	0	0	1	1	4	1	0	6	5	1	0	2	7	

SPECIES	ESTUARY NORTH 27 DEC 2024	FENTON 26 DEC 2024	FLORAL 30 DEC 2024	FORTQU'APPELLE 14 DEC 2024	GARDINER DAM 16 DEC 2024	GRENFELL 02 JAN 2025	HARRIS 14 DEC 2024	HUDSON BAY 28 DEC 2024	INDIAN HEAD 27 DEC 2024	KENASTON 15 DEC 2024	KENOSEELAKE 21 JAN 2025	KILWINNING 26 DEC 2024	KYLE 31 DEC 2024	LARONGE 26 DEC 2024	LOVE-TORCH RIVER 26 DEC 2024	LUSLELAND 27

TABLE 3. Species found on 5 or more counts; () = seen during Count Period (CP).

SPECIES	NICOLE FLATS 16 DEC. 2024	NIPAWIN 24 DEC 2024	NORTH BATTLEFORD 30 DEC 2024	OUTLOOK 3 JAN 2025	PIKE LAKE 1 JAN 2025	PRINCE ALBERT 15 DEC 2024	QUAPPPELLE DAM 15 DEC 2024	REDBERRY LAKE 28 DEC 2024	REGINA 28 DEC 2024	ROSCOMMON S.D. 3 JAN 2025	ROSETOWN 23 DEC 2024	ROTHBURN 4 JAN 2024	ROULEAU 30 DEC 2024	SALTCAOTS 18 DEC 2024	SASK LANDING P.P. 30 DEC 2024	SASK RIVER FORKS 29 DEC 2024	SASKATOON 26 DEC 2024	SHAMROCK 3 JAN 2025	
Canada Goose				(12)			2		175							595			
Mallard							65		391							200			
Common Goldeneye			(2)				42		9							750			
Common Merganser					1					(1)						3			
Ruffed Grouse				1	9	1		6		9									
Sharp-tailed Grouse	158			326	6	137	232	169	74		51	13	28	31	211	10	160	43	
Gray Partridge	731	21		12	70	1	324	228		1651	56	322	89	66	36	334		495 1000	
Ring-necked Pheasant						(1)							5	5			20		
Rock Pigeon	142	309		(35)	50	377	123	126	76	2040	9	361	54	288	35	58	110	1704 123	
Eurasian Collared-Dove			2	(3)			4				1	3					31	3	
Rough-legged Hawk								(1)				1							
Golden Eagle														1					
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1			(1)		(1)				1							2		
American Coshawk															1	2			
Bald Eagle	3	2			1	1		7	2	1				8		1	1		
Snowy Owl								2	3	(1)	5		18		(1)			2	
Great Horned Owl							1	1	(1)	(2)			(1)	1	4		1		
Northern Hawk Owl						(1)			1	(1)									
Great Gray Owl							3			5		(1)		1				1	
Downy Woodpecker	4	2	1	1	41	14	9	3	3	18	13	(1)	2		13	2	2	69	
Hairy Woodpecker	4	3	1	1	26	7	16	1	8	9	9	(1)	3		15	1	3	31	
Northern Flicker					1		4	(1)		1			4			2		17	
Pileated Woodpecker			1			3	6		1				(1)		2			4	
Merlin							1					7						5	
Gyrfalcon								1								1			
Prairie Falcon										1									
Northern Shrike	1			(1)			2			4	2	3		1					
Canada Jay							3												
Blue Jay	1	27		(5)	4	51		2	16	1	17	1	7		5		22	64	
Black-billed Magpie	50	39	11	2	141	137	49	37	53	46	46	69	4	7	9	87	51	878 10	
American Crow												2						14	
Common Raven	41	145	2	38	58	430	36	12	24	151	35	9	12	5	55	15	20	161 5	
Black-capped Chickadee	26	36		5	378	163	64	25	74	265	71		24		70	17	38	654	
Boreal Chickadee															3				
Horned Lark	4									32	32		104		5	6		21	
Golden-crowned Kinglet											3					1			
Bohemian Waxwing															1				
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	9			2	6	10		6		73	3		2				174	
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	1			1	16	7	1	1	6	16	6		2		5		28	
European Starling	4	100			6		1			1	11			20		5	92	80	
American Robin											3						3		
House Sparrow	26	17	30	3	150	235	312	38	23	1771	57	432	84	18		235	11	3303 238	
Evening Grosbeak																			
Pine Grosbeak																			
House Finch																			
Purple Finch																			
Redpoll																			
White-winged Crossbill																			
Pine Siskin																			
American Goldfinch																			
Snow Bunting	165	3		(17)	569	181	335	340	303	(1)	520	54	31	20	707	217	384	45	294
Dark-eyed Junco																		8	
TOTAL BIRDS COUNT DAY	1366	862	48	90	1865	2808	1412	1284	865	7017	964	1413	478	485	1106	1202	954	10226	1762
TOTAL BIRDS ONLY IN CP	0	0	0	131	0	6	1	0	0	7	4	7	7	1	0	1	1	0	
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	19	20	7	12	21	33	14	26	24	42	19	12	19	14	19	18	22	39	12
TOTAL SPECIES ONLY IN CP	0	0	0	9	0	6	1	0	0	6	3	3	6	1	0	1	2	0	

SPECIES	SHELL LAKE 2 JAN 2025	SOUTH LADY LAKE 21 DEC 2024	SPINNEY HILL 27 DEC 2024	STONY RAPIDS 15 DEC 2024	SWIFT CURRENT 14 DEC 2024	THICKWOOD SPIRIT QOD 3 JAN 2025	TISDALE 31 DEC 2024	TORCH RIVER VALLEY 22 DEC 2024	TURTLEFORD 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	TOTALS COUNT DAY	TOTALS ONLY IN COUNT PERIOD	#COUNTS COUNT DAY	#COUNTS ONLY IN
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TABLE 4. Species found in fewer than 5 counts.

SPECIES	LOCALITY AND NUMBER (*=SEEN DURING COUNT PERIOD)
Cackling Goose	Estevan (2*), Gardiner Dam (27), Regina (1)
Trumpeter Swan	Crooked Lake (3)
Tundra Swan	Crooked Lake (1)
Wood Duck	Regina (1)
Northern Shoveler	Regina (1*)
Northern Pintail	Crooked Lake (1), Qu'Appelle Dam (3)
Green-winged Teal	Gardiner Dam (1), Indian Head (1), Moose Jaw (1), Regina (2)
Redhead	Gardiner Dam (20)
Ring-necked Duck	Gardiner Dam (2)
Greater Scaup	Gardiner Dam (2)
Lesser Scaup	Gardiner Dam (20)
Long-tailed Duck	Saskatoon (1)
Bufflehead	Clark's Crossing (1), Estevan (1*)
Hooded Merganser	Saskatoon (1)
Red-breasted Merganser	Gardiner Dam (2)
Wild Turkey	Estevan (27)
Spruce Grouse	Archerwill (2), Candle Lake (1), Hudson Bay (5), La Ronge (2)
Willow Ptarmigan	La Ronge (6*), Stony Rapids (58)
Mourning Dove	Gardiner Dam (1), Shell Lake (2)
American Coot	Estevan (1*), Regina (2)
Sandhill Crane	Gardiner Dam (1)
California Gull	Gardiner Dam (1*), Regina (1)
Herring Gull	Gardiner Dam (16)
Glaucous Gull	Gardiner Dam (1)
Double-crested Cormorant	Gardiner Dam (1)
Northern Harrier	Yorkton (1)
Cooper's Hawk	Fort Qu'Appelle (1*)
Red-tailed Hawk	Moose Jaw (1)
Barred Owl	Thickwood-Spiritwood (1*)
Short-eared Owl	Clark's Crossing (1), Denholm (1*), Morse (1), Nipawin (1)
Boreal Owl	Clark's Crossing (1*), Estevan (1), Rosthern (1*), Saskatoon (1)
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Dundurn (1*)
American Three-toed Woodpecker	Candle Lake (1), Love-Torch River (1*), Nipawin (1), Prince Albert (1)
Black-backed Woodpecker	E.B. Campbell Dam (1), Love-Torch River (2)
Cedar Waxwing	Estuary (12)
Brown Creeper	Broadview (1*), Regina (3), Rosthern (1*), Swift Current (2)
Sage Thrasher	Regina (1)
Townsend's Solitaire	Borden-Radisson (1), Regina (3)
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	Val Marie (10)
Red Crossbill	Balganoe (16), Regina (1)
Lapland Longspur	Saltcoats (1)
Harris's Sparrow	Love-Torch River (1)
White-throated Sparrow	Regina (3)
Spotted Towhee	Hudson Bay (1)
Western Meadowlark	South Lady Lake (1)
Red-winged Blackbird	Estuary North (1), Moose Jaw (4), Regina (1*)
Rusty Blackbird	Kilwinning (1), Pike Lake (1)
Common Grackle	Avonlea (1*), Broadview (1*), Weyburn (1)

TABLE 5. Birds not identified to species.

Buteo sp.	Gardiner Dam (1)
Woodpecker sp.	Saskatoon (2), Nicolle Flats (2)
Nuthatch sp.	Saskatoon (2)
Finch sp.	Clarks Crossing (6)

A male Downy Woodpecker.
Photo credit: Randy McCulloch.

Canada Jay. Photo credit: Randy McCulloch.

TABLE 6. New (in bold and italics) and tying high counts for individual species 2024.

LOCATION	2024 COUNT	SPECIES	PREVIOUS HIGH	LOCATION, YEAR
Crooked Lake	3	Trumpeter Swan	3	Douglas P.P. (26 December 1988)
Saskatoon	1	Long-tailed Duck	1	7 counts north to E.B.Campbell Dam
Morse	1896	Gray Partridge	824	Morse (2008)
Regina	1	California Gull	1	Regina (26 Dec. 2022)
Clark's Crossing*, Estevan, Rosthern*, Saskatoon	1	Boreal Owl	1	South to White Bear and Indian Head
Dundurn	1	Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	9 counts north to Crooked River and Nipawin
Swift Current	3	Gyrfalcon	3	Squaw Rapids (24 Dec. 1982), Gardiner Dam (18 Dec. 2000)
Regina	1	Sage Thrasher	New	
Hudson Bay	1	Spotted Towhee	1	North to Turtle Lake and Saskatoon

52ND ANNUAL SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTMAS MAMMAL COUNT - 2024

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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.

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.

FUNDING AVAILABLE
Wildlife Friendly Fencing
Water Development
Native Seeding

50:50 Project cost-share



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.R. 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																			
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		3			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																		1	
Long-tailed Weasel						t													
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			9	
Elk	c					c					c							200	
Pronghorn																			
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 QU'APPELLE 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	LOVE-TORCH RIVER 26 DEC 2024	LARONGE 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																			
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				
Capper's Red-Backed Vole																			
Meadow Vole				1								t							
Vole species			t																
Norway Rat											t								
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												t							
Ermine																			
Least Weasel									t			t						1	
Long-tailed Weasel												t							
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	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	PRINCE ALBERT 15 DEC 2024	QUAPPILLE 27 DEC 2024	QUAPPILLE DAM 15 DEC 2024	REDBERRY LAKE 28 DEC 2024	REGINA 28 DEC 2024	ROSCOMMON S.D. 5 JAN 2025	ROSETOWN 23 DEC 2024	ROSTHORN 4 JAN 2024	ROULEAU 30 DEC 2024	SALTCOATS 18 DEC 2024	SASKLANDING P.P. 30 DEC 2024	SASKRIVER FORKS 29 DEC 2024	SASKATOON 26 DEC 2024	SHANROCK 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		
Deer 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	TURTLEFORD 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
Capper'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

NOTES ON HABITAT USE AND OVIPOSITION IN *SPHAGNIANA SPHAGNORUM* AT MARS HILL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA IN SOUTHEAST MANITOBA

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The main range of *S. sphagnorum* (Walker, 1869), a native shield-backed katydid (Tettigoniidae), extends from western Québec to western Northwest Territories and eastern British Columbia.¹ *S. sphagnorum* has long been considered endemic to Canada; however, this species has recently been documented in northern Minnesota, representing the first records south of the Canadian border.²⁻⁴ The conservation status of *S. sphagnorum* in Manitoba is S4S5, or “apparently secure”⁵

The insect order Orthoptera is comprised of grasshoppers, katydids, crickets and other related insects. Members of the suborder Ensifera are variously known as katydids, long-horned grasshoppers, true crickets or bush crickets, depending on location. The shield-backed katydids of the subfamily Tettigoniinae are so named for their shieldlike pronotum and are widely distributed across North America. Many species are predaceous to a lesser or greater degree.

S. sphagnorum is small to medium in size and mainly brown, its saddle-like pronotum broad, elongated and widening rearward. The lower margin of the dark pronotal disc is yellow to green. A row of black spots appear laterally along the abdomen and the rear margin of each segment is green. All tibiae are green. The ovipositor is upward-curving and swordlike. Both sexes may be macropterous (long-winged) or brachypterous (short-winged). *S. sphagnorum* occurs on the ground, in grasses and in shrubs and trees. Male *S. sphagnorum* have a unique, two-part calling song that steadily alternates between two intensities; these songs are useful in species' detection and identification (east of Manitoba, the Slender Meadow Katydid (*Cococephalus fasciatus*) is the only tettigoniid species to occur with *S. sphagnorum* in boggy habitats).⁶

Previously documented habitats of

S. sphagnorum include bogs and open, grassy areas.^{7,8} My field observations of *S. sphagnorum* (supported by records from “citizen-science” internet platforms such as iNaturalist) indicate additional habitat associations. In southeastern Manitoba, this includes predominantly dry coniferous forest. One such location is Mars Hill Wildlife Management Area (WMA), where brachypterous females were observed to deposit their eggs shallowly in sandy soil.

Mars Hill WMA is located approximately 69 km northeast of Winnipeg in mixed boreal forest of the Boreal Plains Ecozone.^{9,10} The study site is located within mossy, open Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*) forest, where the understory vegetation includes woody and herbaceous plants such as chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), pin cherry (*Prunus pensylvanica*), saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), blueberry (*Vaccinium* sp), common bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), eastern teaberry (*Gaultheria procumbens*) and Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*), among others. Small, grassy openings occur at irregular intervals.

Informal surveys of Orthoptera held on 13 August 2013 and 12 September 2023 each produced one gravid female *S. sphagnorum*. Weather conditions were similar on each day, i.e. mainly sunny with light wind (<15 km/h) and temperatures

between 17 and 21 °C.¹¹ Both *S. sphagnorum* were located in the afternoon (12:43 h and 13:58 h), initially on bare substrate within the forest stand, or on ground cover. In each case, the female oviposited in nearby tracks made by the passage of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Based on extended observations of the latter female (1.5 hours), the location of oviposition on the open sand of the two-track was apparently randomly selected. The ovipositor was manipulated half-way into the soil and if the condition was adequate, the egg-laying continued for 20 minutes. The female remained largely immobile during this period. Afterward, concealment of the opening was limited to the settling of sand grains resulting from the withdrawal of the ovipositor (this was also the case with the former female). A marker placed to identify the relative position of the eggs was disturbed so that no data were obtained as to the number laid or how deeply they were deposited, but based on photographs taken in situ, the latter was estimated to be at a maximum depth of 1.5 cm. Observations of oviposition by the former female, though abbreviated, also indicated shallow egg deposition.

Insects that cannot self-regulate body temperature (ectotherms) depend on external heat sources to reach and



FIGURE1. All terrain vehicle tracks in Jack Pine forest at Mars Hill Wildlife Management Area – a preferred oviposition site for *S. sphagnorum*.



FIGURE2. *S. sphagnorum* ovipositing.

maintain a preferred body temperature (that at which they can most efficiently forage and breed). Basking, or “sun bathing”, on fully insulated soil in times of low ambient temperature, e.g. early or late in the day/season or under light cloud cover, and on vegetation when ambient temperatures are warmer, is a process known as thermoregulation.¹² Basking accounted for more than 70 per cent of the latter katydid’s activities during the survey period and was undertaken immediately pre- and post-oviposition on fully insulated soil, as well as briefly atop recumbent vegetation. Feeding by the female was limited to the consumption of a small weed head. The diet niche breadth of *S. sphagnorum* is unknown; Glenn Morris (pers. comm.) indicates Three-leaf Solomon’s Seal (*Maianthemum trifolia*) as a favoured food plant in northern Ontario bogs, and in captivity.

This plant was not recorded at the Mars Hill WMA site, nor at any other sites in southeast Manitoba where I have found *S. sphagnorum*; however, the wide availability of Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*) in the region may present a common food source for adults and nymphs. My observations of the katydid concluded with its departure into the forest understory.

Co-occurring orthopterans at Mars Hill WMA include *Melanoplus dawsoni*, *M. fasciatus*, *M. huroni*, *Pseudochorthippus curtipennis*, *Chloeoaltis abdominalis*, *C. conspersa* and *Gryllus pennsylvanicus*.

The fitness of insect eggs and subsequent offspring is dependent on the mother’s choice of oviposition site, which provides them with shelter and access to food sources. Subsurface oviposition is practiced by many orthopterans, whose eggs develop in a favourable microclimate, and are protected from parasites,

parasitoids and predators (for orthopterans these may include parasitic wasps, carabid beetles, crickets and arachnids, as well as birds).¹³ It is unclear whether egg deposition in sandy soil is a common behaviour in *S. sphagnorum*; certainly a more obvious and perhaps common choice of substrate for *S. sphagnorum* eggs is bog sphagnum moss, as recorded by GM in northern Ontario, or under spruce (*Picea* sp) bark (personal comment). It is interesting to note that unlike other tettigoniids, *S. sphagnorum* eggs have a uniformly black chorion, the function of which may be to promote radiative heat movement (GM, pers. comm.).

With the exception of studies on aspects of male calling song, male interaction and morphological adaptations, little has been published on the biology of *S. sphagnorum*.¹⁴⁻¹⁷ The information herein is presented as a contribution to our increasing understanding of this enigmatic, and adaptable, northern katydid.

Acknowledgements

My appreciation to Larry de March for his analysis and suggestions on the draft manuscript. Sincere thanks to Glenn Morris for his generosity in providing data for the article, and recommendations for a more fully realized essay.

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NATURE SASKATCHEWAN SPRING MEET

Yorkton, SK June 20-22, 2025

Friday, June 20

6:30 p.m. - Registration at the Gallagher Centre (refreshments provided)

7:30 p.m. - Evening program

- Presentation by Colin Arlt, Executive Director, Buffalo Culture Collective
- Viewing of "Interview with Ruth Smith: The Beginnings of the Blue Jay Journal"
- Information and tour updates for Saturday

Saturday, June 21

Breakfast on your own

8:30 a.m. - Cars leave the Gallagher Centre toward morning tour destinations

12:00 p.m. - Brown bagged lunch at picnic area near the Dune Trail (Good Spirit Provincial Park)

1:00 p.m. - Cars leave for afternoon tour destinations

Saturday Evening at the Gallagher Centre

5:30 p.m. - Cocktails

6:00 p.m. - Banquet

7:00 p.m. - Evening program

- Presentation by Myrna Pearman - Biologist, Writer, Photographer and Naturalist: *Beauty Everywhere: Tales of a Wandering Photographer*

Sunday, June 22 Annual General Meeting

9:00 a.m. - Annual General Meeting at the Gallagher Centre (coffee and tea provided)

TOUR INFORMATION

TOUR A Bluebird Banding Along the Anaka Trail

The Yellowhead Nature Society (YNS) happily inherited the Anaka Trail and continue the work that was started by Joyce and Bill Anaka in 1984. More than 40 years later, the Bluebirds still return and make the nest boxes along the Good Spirit Community Pasture their home.

Tour leaders: Lorne Scott and Rob Wilson

TOUR B Road Allowance Habitat - For All to Enjoy

This will be an opportunity to explore and enjoy the healthy and diverse municipal roads that are protected as part of a partnership project with the RMs of Wallace, Orkney, Saltcoats, Cana and the Yellowhead Nature Society (YNS). A perfect activity for birders and plant enthusiasts.

Tour leaders: YNS members

TOUR C Exploring the Dunes (Good Spirit Prov. Park)

This will be an easy 1.6 km walk along the Dune Discovery Trail at the south end of Good Spirit Lake; a chance to explore the fragile and fascinating ecology of shifting dunes. Your leaders will provide some interesting history and explain how a trading post ended up as a Provincial Park as well as some of the important ongoing water management that is needed to keep the lake healthy.

**Tour leaders: Nancy Bird, YNS member and Jesse Nielsen,
Manager of the Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association.**



SPRING MEET

Yorkton, SK

June 20-22, 2025

Spring Meet fees include refreshments on Friday evening, Saturday tours (carpooling will be required) with lunch, and supper on Saturday evening.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s)		
Address		
Phone #		
Email		
Dietary	Do you have any dietary restrictions? If yes, please specify:	

TOUR OPTIONS Please select **1 tour** for the morning and **1 tour** for the afternoon

TOUR A	Bluebird Banding Along the Anaka Trail	AM	PM
TOUR B	Road Allowance Habitat - For All to Enjoy	AM	PM
TOUR C	Exploring the Dunes - Good Spirit Provincial Park	AM	PM

*Non-member registration includes an electronic membership for the remainder of 2025

Early Registration (until May 24)

Member: \$144

Non-Member: \$160*

Late Registration (May 24 on)

Member: \$154

Non-Member: \$170

Member Registration: **\$144** (early)/ **\$154** (late) x = \$

Non-Member Reg: **\$160** (early)/ **\$170** (late) x = \$

Additional Individual Banquet Tickets **\$45** each x **45** = \$

*All prices include GST

Total Due: = \$

Pay by cheque (payable to Nature Saskatchewan), e-transfer to info@naturesask.ca
VISA or Mastercard

CREDIT CARD: / / / EXP / CVC

Suggested accommodations: A block of rooms is being held at the Home Inn and Suites until May 20 (homehotels.ca/yorkton). Alternately, camping is available at York Lake Regional Park (306-782-7080) and The City of Yorkton Campground (306-786-1757)

STEWARDS OF SASKATCHEWAN PROGRAMS

Each summer, the Stewards of Saskatchewan (SOS) staff are busy connecting with land stewards, surveying for species at risk, and promoting awareness of our disappearing prairie parkland landscapes and their biological diversity. This work is supported by hard working summer staff and, in 2025, we are pleased to welcome Abbey Derrow, Tyan Cherepuschak, Vanessa Wagner, Amy Bailey, Maizie Anderson, Brandon Melnechenko, Tory Frankl and Ash Latta to the SOS team.



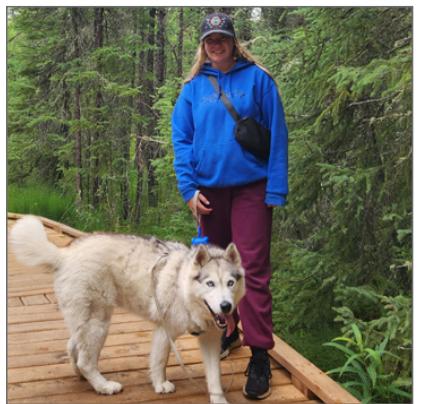
Abbey Derrow - Habitat Stewardship Assistant

Abbey was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, and spent much of her summers outdoors at Duck Mountain Provincial Park. During those summers, she attended various outdoor camps and spent lots of time camping with her sisters. Some of her fondest memories involve being outdoors with them, even if it meant pretending to camp by tenting in their backyard. Currently, Abbey is completing her Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Though not directly related, it has helped her realize what being outdoors can truly do for a person's mental health. Her favourite outdoor activities are hiking and canoeing—so much so that last summer, she was park interpreter at Duck Mountain where she led the public in these activities. Aside from all her time spent outdoors, Abbey has a strong interest in aviation. She has completed the air cadet program and has obtained her private pilot's licence. This solidified her love for nature as seeing the province from that perspective—especially the beautiful skies in Saskatchewan—is a truly amazing experience. Overall, Abbey is very excited for this summer and for all the knowledge and experience that it will bring!



Tyan Cherepuschak - Habitat Stewardship Assistant

Tyan is from Pilot Butte, Saskatchewan, and grew up with a love of the outdoors, shaped especially by the Qu'Appelle Valley. For him, growing up camping, playing sports and spending time at the lake turned into volunteering with the Canadian Wildlife Federation and taking environmental science in high school. After high school, Tyan left home to attend university and has kept busy since, studying in British Columbia, Cuba, and the Netherlands while spending each summer back in Saskatchewan for work. Currently an anthropology and environmental science student at the University of Victoria, Tyan looks forward to joining the Nature Saskatchewan team this summer to promote the conservation of our province's natural ecosystems. In the fall, he will return to Victoria to finish his last semester of university before graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree, after which he looks forward to returning home to the prairies. Beyond school and work, Tyan enjoys curling, cycling, history, music, and speed skating.



Vanessa Wagner - Rare Plant Rescue Search Crew

Vanessa is excited to be joining Nature Saskatchewan for her second summer as part of the Rare Plant Rescue Search Crew! She grew up on an acreage in southern Saskatchewan and always had a fascination with animals and plants, so having the opportunity to help protect our native species is something that her younger self would love to see her doing now. Vanessa attends the University of Regina and is currently completing a double major in Environmental Biology and Geoscience. Although it takes a lot of work, she is really enjoying it! In her free time, Vanessa enjoys playing with her husky, Naia, and taking her camping and hiking. She also likes baking, crafting and snowboarding in the winter.



Amy Bailey - Rare Plant Rescue Search Crew

Amy was raised on her family's farm near Alida, Saskatchewan. Growing up, she spent most of her time outside exploring, gardening with her mother, and working with animals. Eventually her interest in nature led Amy to chose natural resources as her career path. After graduating with an Integrated Resource Management diploma from Saskatchewan Polytechnic, she is very excited for the upcoming field season. In her spare time, Amy enjoys going on hikes, birdwatching, camping and backpacking. When she is not outdoors, Amy can be found painting, baking, working on various crafts, and can never resist a hot cup of tea and getting lost in a good book. This is her third summer on the Rare Plant Rescue Search and Monitoring crew at Nature Saskatchewan and she is very excited to have returned.

WELCOME SUMMER STAFF FOR 2025



Maizie Anderson - Rare Plant Rescue Search Crew

Maizie was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, and grew up taking part in all things outdoors. Her favourite childhood memories are from exploring the old-growth wood lot on her family's farm in southern Ontario where she would take numerous pictures of fungi and find as many frogs, toads, or salamanders as possible. Maizie enjoys camping, fishing, hiking, skiing, ice fishing, and reading a good book in a hammock. She is currently a second-year biology student at the University of Regina and is excited to explore all that the realm of biology has to offer. Maizie recently graduated from 41 Hercules Air Cadet Squadron after seven years of being heavily involved with the program. Her first interaction with Nature Saskatchewan was when she was seven and obsessed with Burrowing Owls—she was inspired to help the owls and raised money for Nature Saskatchewan's Operation Burrowing Owl program. This is Maizie's second summer with Nature Saskatchewan, with last year holding the role of Rare Plant Rescue Habitat Stewardship Assistant. This year, she is excited to do more field work as a member of the Rare Plant Rescue Search Crew, and to contribute to the conservation of Saskatchewan's beautiful prairie and its rare plants.



Brandon Melnechenko - Rare Plant Rescue Search Crew

Brandon was born and raised in Regina and also enjoyed time lending a hand on the family farm in the Foam Lake region of Saskatchewan. He has always loved being outdoors and has made the best of the coldest winters and the hottest summers by finding spots to go fishing and enjoying the scenery. Brandon's passion for the outdoors led to him completing a Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation Diploma at Lakeland College in 2023 and he is now completing a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Biology at the University of Regina. After spending the past two summers as a part of Nature Saskatchewan's Rare Plant Rescue crew, Brandon is ecstatic to be a part of the team once again and to continue to contribute to the conservation of plant species and habitats throughout Saskatchewan. He has learned so much while working with Nature Saskatchewan and, in addition to finding rare plants, he has been grateful for all the diversity in between—including the common plants and grasses, the wildlife, the water or lack thereof, the stewards of the land, and everything else that makes the native prairie so unique. Brandon is looking forward to another great field season alongside like-minded people in an effort to conserve what makes Saskatchewan so beautiful.



Tory Frankl - Rare Plant Rescue Habitat Stewardship Assistant

Tory was born and raised in Regina, but spent many weekends on her family farm. She now mostly works with cattle and helps move grain during her visits. This past winter, she took up skate-skiing in her spare time to make the winters more enjoyable and spends her summers horseback riding, hiking, traveling, and camping. Tory earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Biology from the University of Regina and worked in rangeland management during the summers between semesters. After graduating, she worked in a tree ring lab before joining Nature Saskatchewan in the spring of 2024. She started as team lead for the Rare Plant Rescue Search and Monitoring Crew and has since worked as a Conservation Database Technician and now as the Rare Plant Rescue Habitat Stewardship Assistant. Tory looks forward to connecting with more landholders and exploring the ins and outs of Saskatchewan's outdoors!



Ash Latta - LMBO/NatureHood Assistant

Ash Latta was born in Regina, Saskatchewan and spent most of his summers outside and camping with his family. He has also spent many hours volunteering with the youth conservation group Wild Outside. Ash worked with Nature Saskatchewan for the first time in 2023 and was eager to return. He is in his first year of studies at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, working toward a diploma in Resource Management. Ash enjoys expanding his knowledge and trying new experiences that bring him out of his comfort zone. When he isn't sitting on his front porch enjoying a good book and a warm cup of tea, Ash can be found trying new hobbies or walking along the lake and taking pictures of anything that catches his eye. ↗

NATURE SASKATCHEWAN AWARDS:

Each year at the Fall Meet, we recognize outstanding service and contributions that Society members and/or affiliate and partner organizations have made toward Nature Saskatchewan's objectives and goals.

Clear criteria have been established in terms of purpose, eligibility, and nomination procedure. This year, we are seeking nominations for three classes of awards—Volunteer Recognition Award, Fellows Award, and Conservation Award.

The Volunteer Recognition Award and Conservation Award can be conferred on the same individual or organization more than once.

The Cliff Shaw Award will also be presented at the Fall Meet. The recipient is chosen by the *Blue Jay* editor.

Local societies throughout Saskatchewan play an important role in furthering conservation and appreciation of nature at the local level. There are always those who step up to the plate to organize meetings and outings, go the extra mile to help others connect with nature, or work silently and tirelessly behind the scenes. It's time those contributions were recognized. We encourage anyone from a local society to consider nominating someone from your local group who is a Nature Saskatchewan member, who deserves recognition for any of these awards. Note that nominees for the Volunteer Recognition Award and Fellows Award must hold a current membership with Nature Saskatchewan.

Nomination Procedure

The nomination procedure is the same for all three awards. The criteria and names of past recipients can be found on the website at www.naturesask.ca/what-we-do/awards. The office can also send a copy by mail, if preferred.

Nominations can be made by Nature Saskatchewan members, directors, and staff. Local societies should consider nominating someone from their local group.

- Self-nominations will not be accepted.
- Nominations are to be made in writing and submitted by the published deadline.
- Nominations are to include the

following information: the nominee's name, address, and phone number; the nominator's name and contact information; details of the nominee's efforts.

• The Awards Committee will independently rate the nominations, and confirm that the nominee holds a current membership with Nature Saskatchewan.

• Chairperson of the Awards Committee will bring the recommendations to the Board.

• If ratified, the President or his/her delegate shall confer the respective Awards to the recipients at the Fall Meet.

The deadline to submit nominations for awards is August 29, 2025.

All Nature Saskatchewan Awards consist of the following:

• The announcement of the recipient's name at the Fall Meet.

• The presentation of a certificate recognizing the contribution.

• An announcement in *Blue Jay* recognizing the distinction.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARD

This award was created in 1996 to acknowledge an individual Nature Saskatchewan member who has devoted significant time and energy to promoting the objectives of the Society, including contributions made at the local society level. Priority for this award will be given to a Nature Saskatchewan member whose volunteer work has helped to enhance the public awareness of the Society (this may include contributions to a Society conservation project or program). It may be appropriate in some years to have this award shared by more than one person, if they have worked together on the same project, or on closely related projects.

Eligibility

Nature Saskatchewan members who have provided valuable time and effort in contributing to the Society are eligible. Local societies are encouraged to nominate someone from their local group who is a Nature Saskatchewan member, recognizing

CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

The resolutions considered during the Business Meeting at each year's Fall Meet are important expressions of member concerns on environmental issues. The Nature Saskatchewan Board of Directors is responsible for acting on all resolutions that are passed by the members. This includes sending resolutions directly to the responsible government ministry and pursuing further action and/or meetings with government and others, as deemed appropriate.

Anyone wishing to submit a resolution for consideration at the 2025 Business Meeting, is asked to send a written draft to the Nature Saskatchewan Office (info@naturesask.ca) no later than **Friday, August 15, 2025**. This provides an opportunity to receive feedback from members of the resolutions committee that can help to improve your resolution. It also helps us

prepare for the meeting. Please note that resolutions not submitted to the Nature Saskatchewan office by **5 p.m. on Friday, September 5, 2025** will be considered only with the agreement of a two-thirds majority of those attending the business meeting.

Resolution Guidelines:

1. Resolutions must be in keeping with the society's mandate, bylaws and goals.
2. All resolutions must be submitted in writing.
3. A resolution is, essentially, an exercise in communication. Simple, clear language and focus on one topic or issue is most effective.
4. Supporting information presented in "Whereas" statements must be accurate and factual.
5. Resolutions should be no longer than one page, and preferably less.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

that Nature Saskatchewan values their contributions to the overall goals of the Society. The nominee must be a current member of Nature Saskatchewan. This award can be conferred on the same person more than once.

FELLOWS AWARD Purpose of the Award

A motion was passed at the 1987 Annual General Meeting creating a new class of honorary membership entitled "Fellows of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society". This award recognizes an extensive and continuing contribution of time over many years to the Society and its objectives. Up to five recipients may be chosen annually. Once selected, Fellows hold that title as long as they remain members of the Society. It is the highest honour the Society can bestow upon a member.

Eligibility

Eligible individuals are members of Nature Saskatchewan who have provided an outstanding time and work contribution to the Society over many years. These contributions have been significant, and may have come in the form of leadership, communication, authorship, social media outreach, research, and other areas. The contributions have been cumulative or ongoing, and represent long-standing service or commitment to Nature Saskatchewan and its objectives.

CONSERVATION AWARD Purpose of the Award

In addition to advocacy and other forms of conservation action, it is important that Nature Saskatchewan recognize, as it has done since 1953, those both within and beyond the organization who have

done "meritorious work in the interest of conservation in Saskatchewan."

Nature Saskatchewan's Conservation Award will be presented to an individual or organization whose total contribution to conservation is outstanding, whether in relation to a particular project or in a number of roles over a period of years.

Eligibility

Individuals, affiliate and/or partner organizations, not-for-profit associations, institutions, community groups, businesses, government and non-government organizations that have contributed significantly to conservation in Saskatchewan.

This award can be conferred on the same individual or organization more than once.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS! NATURE SASKATCHEWAN FUNDERS LISTING 2024-25 FISCAL YEAR

NatureHood

- Nature Canada
- Nature Canada – Work to Grow
- City of Regina
- City of Saskatoon
- Nature Regina
- SaskOutdoors
- Provincial Capital Commission

Important Bird Areas

- Ministry of Environment – Fish and Wildlife Development Fund
- The Prairie Canada Piping Plover Census (PCPPC)
- Environment and Climate Change Canada-Canadian Wildlife Service
- Last Mountain Bird Observatory
- South Saskatchewan Community Foundation – Murray and Edna Forbes
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Ministry of Environment – Fish and Wildlife Development Fund
- Nature Saskatchewan General Fund
- Sask Culture/SK Lotteries

Stewards of Saskatchewan

- Environment and Climate Change Canada – Priority Places, Habitat Stewardship Program, and Community Nominated Priority Places
- Enbridge Inc.
- SaskEnergy
- The Mosaic Company
- SaskTel
- Canada Summer Jobs
- US Fish and Wildlife Service – Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grant
- Ministry of Environment – Fish and Wildlife Development Fund
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture - Agriculture Awareness Initiative Program
- R. Howard Webster Foundation
- TC Energy
- RBC Foundation – Tech for Nature
- Eco Canada – Science Horizons Internship Grant
- United Nations Association in Canada - Canada Green Corps' Science and Technology Internship Programme

Nature Saskatchewan would also like to thank our many generous individual donors who contributed throughout the year.

NATIVE TROUT — TIME TESTED

Lorne Fitch, P. Biol.
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If one were to scroll back through the tenure of native trout and their ancestors, on a whiplash-inducing rush through deep time, one might begin to appreciate the varieties of geologic episodes that formed, rejumbled, buried and exhumed the landscapes of trout.

What native trout endured, evolved with and adapted to included: encroaching seas, retreating seas, volcanic events, continental drift, crustal deformations, drainage captures, drainage separations, orogenies, folding, faulting, igneous bulges, uplifts, down cuts, multiple glacial events, millions of years of weathering and erosion, plus extremes of fire, flood, ice and drought. The odds of a fish surviving that smorgasbord of natural events seems improbable. But trout did survive, in an exuberance in awe of which we should stand.

Yet, in the last century and often less, a mere blip in geologic time, the effects of the wheel, clear-cuts, mines, dams, climate change and, to a degree, the hook, have made the previous thousands of years of trout existence in Alberta seem benign.

Bull trout, cutthroat trout, Athabasca rainbows, mountain whitefish and Arctic grayling are native to our Eastern Slopes. Many generations ago they came from other geographies, but settled in those streams along the eastern side of the continental divide and onto the western fringes of the grasslands, parkland and boreal forest. From visitors and tourists they became residents with a long, earned tenure. These species are ancient but their future is precarious.

They are creatures limited to a certain condition of life — that is — the watersheds in which they evolved for the past 12,000 years. There is no place to go back to — it doesn't exist anymore. They make their last stand here, in an ecology dramatically altered by us. Some populations, in watersheds both large and small, have been extirpated, a loss of unique genetic inheritance; all remaining populations hang on by a fin. Once these trout would have been counted in the thousands, then it was hundreds, then dozens, then a dozen and for some, finally, none. They are not headed

to the final roundup — they are in it.

The combination of climate change, lack of connectivity, competition from non-native trout and habitat loss is particularly devastating for native trout since it attacks them from different but cumulative angles. It's hard to find a good survival strategy that works simultaneously against multiple threats. Nothing in their past experience provides any sort of adaptive solutions to changes that happened in an apparent split-second of their lengthy existence. We also seem unwilling to acknowledge the new normal in their disrupted world and the chances are slim of native trout adjusting to that altered state in any meaningful time.

Of many alterations, one was the imposition of non-native trout species on top of existing native ones. Non-native trout hitched a free ride to the new universe; it took native trout thousands upon thousands of years to sort things out in their new geography. We might start culling some of the weeds that are non-native trout, which have replaced and continue to compete with the rightful owners of the Eastern Slope watersheds. It is an unfolding drama of human meddling, with severe consequences.

As we further change the world of native trout, we forget to mourn a reduced, and diminishing stock. So far, none of the native species in the hierarchy of official

protection — not caribou, not white-bark pine, not bull trout, not cutthroat trout, not Athabasca rainbow trout, not Arctic grayling, not grizzly bears — have inspired managers to bring order to a large and increasing land use footprint. Land use plans may help, if they reduce our footprint and restore vital habitats. If we think we have improved the situation with a plan, but no will to implement it, in the end we will discover we have fooled ourselves completely.

We are not protecting native trout from extinction: they are protecting us from an extinction of experience as we engage and begin to understand a world beyond ourselves.

Native trout have been successfully tested by time, but will they stand the test of our time? Native trout can fade from our collective memory, just as their vivid colours dissipate once a trout is removed from the water. It will take some herculean efforts to repaint watersheds with native trout. If we don't try, we leave behind an incomplete piece of art. 

*Lorne Fitch is a Professional Biologist, a retired Fish and Wildlife Biologist and a former Adjunct Professor with the University of Calgary. He is the author of *Streams of Consequence — Dispatches from the Conservation World*.*



HUMAN NATURE: PRAIRIE CONSERVATION IS A TEAM EFFORT

Nathaniel Hak
Nature Saskatchewan 2024
Habitat Stewardship Assistant

As my second summer as a Habitat Stewardship Assistant for Nature Saskatchewan came to a close, I was feeling very lucky to have once again had the chance to meet so many incredible landholders and producers in Nature Saskatchewan's Stewards of Saskatchewan (SOS) programs.

I was blown away by the dedication of our stewards to protect the land that they call home. Their efforts range from small to big, though all are equally important — whether it is leaving an old, long-dead tree in the pasture to ensure that a returning pair of Ferruginous Hawks can maintain their nest year after year, giving a Burrowing Owl nest in a cultivated field a wide berth during seeding, or signing a long-term conservation agreement to ensure that a few sections of native prairie stay that way forever. We're always grateful for participants willing to enroll in our programs, and to take time out of their busy season to report their species-at-risk sightings to us.

It's a mosaic of efforts like these that combine to make a real difference across the province, not just for species at risk but for all of our prairie plant and animal species. In the face of so many challenges to prairie conservation, it was extremely rewarding for me to meet so many dedicated stewards who care about conservation as much as I do. Returning to university for the last year of my degree, and starting to think about my next steps, I am grateful to have been able to learn from our stewards for the past two summers and hear different perspectives about how best to protect different species, all with the shared goal of ensuring that prairie biodiversity remains intact for generations to come.

It's hardly a surprise that our stewards are as passionate about conservation as we are: the land that they call home is quite extraordinary. It was fantastic to explore more of the province's southwest, with which I first became familiar with in the summer of 2023. Every steward has something unique, whether it is a rare species like the Burrowing Owl, a hidden coulee, or a sheltered wetland host to dozens of species of waterfowl. Our Piping

Plover surveys in June 2024 allowed me to see the province through the perspective of southern Saskatchewan's shorelines, which offered the chance to see several shorebirds and aquatic species that call prairie potholes home.

It was gratifying to help build our network of program participants in our suite of programs during the summer. As our programs grow, so too does the number of 'eyes and ears' that we have across the prairies keeping an eye on species at risk occurrences, which ultimately helps us track how species numbers are fluctuating and responding to changes in habitat year after year. Our goal is to one day see these species be downlisted (meaning that their at-risk status is lowered or, ideally, removed from the species at risk list altogether), and our stewards help us get one step closer to achieving that each year.

Wildlife conservation — particularly on the prairies — can be complicated, but the dedication that we see working with our landholder stewards gives me a lot of hope for the future of prairie conservation. It's a team effort and one for which our landholder partners deserve ample credit. 

MYSTERY PHOTO

SUMMER 2025 (top)

QUESTION: What species of dragonfly is shown here? Hint: It can be found in Canada and in parts of the northeastern U.S. and the first part of its English common name provides a clue as to where it lives in Saskatchewan. The name for its genus (the second part of the common name) refers to the patchy colouration of its abdomen, which resembles the pattern seen on a certain group of reptiles.



Photo credit: Morley Maier.

SPRING 2025 (bottom)

ANSWER: The bird species shown in this photo is the Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*).

As per Cornell's *All About Birds* website, while the Upland Sandpiper is a shorebird, it avoids wetlands and spends its time in grassland habitats hunting insects such as grasshoppers. Males can often be seen perched on fence posts early in the breeding season and will perform flight songs over their territories. The association that the Upland Sandpiper has with native prairie is so strong that it is considered an "indicator species" that can indicate the quality of a habitat, along with the likes of the Sprague's Pipit and Baird's Sparrow.



Photo credit: Paul Goossen.

Do you have an image that would make for a good mystery photo challenge? Send it to the *Blue Jay* editor at bluejay@naturesask.ca!

