

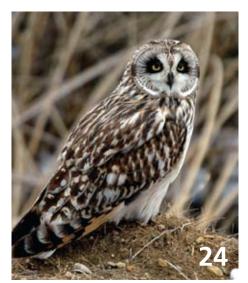




An astounding three new species were added to the all-time Saskatchewan Christmas Bird Count list, including a king eider on the Fort Qu'Appelle Count.



The western red damsel is a small damselfly, 24-28 mm long, and its bright red abdomen distinguishes it from other small damselflies in Saskatchewan, which are mainly blue.



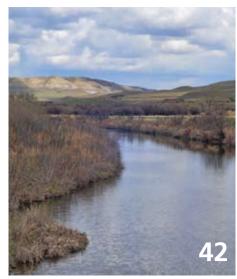
A short-eared owl at Francis Lake, Saskatchewan.



Craig and Lorriene Salisbury discovered a red-winged blackbird with a wafer-thin extension of his maxilla (aka upper mandible).



Eight young mountain bluebirds nearly ready to fledge from a nest box. Young fledge at about 18 days of age.



The Frenchman River between Ravenscrag and Eastend.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Tara Sample

President, Nature Saskatchewan

It is spring and once again the air is filled with the familiar sound of returning songbirds as prairie plants are starting to awaken from their frozen slumber. It is, I think, appropriate that during this season of renewal and new beginnings we launch a new version of the Blue Jav.

On behalf of the Board, I am very pleased to welcome you to this first issue of the new Blue Jay. I think you will enjoy it. The committee endeavoured to honour the society's rich history, while embracing its future. I believe you will find the same commitment to the documentation of our natural history and the sharing of conservation news that has always been important to the society.

Members will have more options in how they read the Blue Jay, too. We are offering it in both digital and print format. I believe this is an important step for the Society and one that aligns well with our new strategic plan that holds engaging youth as an important element. The



Photo credit: Nick Saunders

ON THE COVER

Pine warbler at Holiday Park in Saskatoon, February 2016. This pine warbler, first observed on December 7, 2015, was one of 45 species recorded on December 26, 2015 in Saskatoon as part of the 74th Annual Saskatchewan Christmas Bird Count.

newest generations of naturalists are the ones that have grown up in the digital age, after all.

However, to truly be a success, we need participation from you, our valued members. Please continue to send us your observations, photos and nature-related news. And remember that above all else, this is your Blue Jay and your opinion matters, so let us know what you think. Enjoy your read.



Nature WANTED

Loggerhead Shrike (Threatened)

Songbird with black face mask and contrasting black, grey and white plumage and a hooked, black bill.

Prefers open habitats and thinly wooded areas, including dense or thorny bushes, such as shelterbelts.



Burrowing Owl (Endangered)

Small owl, 9 inches tall with long, featherless legs; plumage is brown and white with beige spots. Most active during dawn and dusk. Found in grassland areas of southern Saskatchewan, sometimes nesting in ditches or cultivated fields.

Monarch (Special Concern)

Bright orange butterfly with marked black veins and wings bordered with two rows of white spots; wingspan is 10 cm. Occurs in southern Saskatchewan, where milkweed and wildflowers grow.





slow-moving streams.

Piping Plover (Endangered)
Small, grey bird with a single black band around
its neck. It has a black forehead band, short

its neck. It has a black forehead band, short orange legs and a black-tipped orange bill. Found on sandy, gravelly or pebbly shorelines.

Northern Leopard Frog (Special Concern) Green to brown with dark spots and two light ridges running along its body from its eyes to its lower back. Found in aspen parkland and grasslands, in and around water. Prefers ponds, marshes, pools and sometimes



Report Sightings to Nature Saskatchewan at: 1-800-667-4668

BLUE JAY SPRING 2016 VOLUME 74.1



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.

Editor: Annie McLeod 3017 Hill Avenue Regina, SK S4S 0W2 E-mail: bluejay@naturesask.ca

Editorial Information

Blue Jay welcomes all submissions, preferably by e-mail (although handwritten or typed manuscripts will be considered to accommodate those who do not have access to computer equipment), polished or in need of some editorial assistance. All items for publication should be sent to the editor electronically (in a Microsoft Word document) by e-mail or on CD. Hard copies and CDs can be mailed to the editor at the address above.

Submission deadlines

January 1 for the Spring issue. April 1 for the Summer issue, July 1 for the Fall issue, and October 1 for the Winter issue. For detailed information, please see the "Guidelines for Authors" under the Publications section of the Nature Saskatchewan website (www.naturesaskatchewan.com).

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HOW THE BLUE JAY GOT ITS NAME

Lorne Scott

Conservation Director Nature Saskatchewan

Isabel Priestly, born in England and residing in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, was instrumental in the formation of the Yorkton Natural History Society (YNHS) in 1942, and in publishing the Society's newsletter — Blue Jay. Charter members of the YNHS included young Stuart Houston and Harvey Beck who authored the Saskatchewan Natural History Society's (SNHS) first Special Publication — The Mammals of Saskatchewan. As many of our members know, Stuart and Mary Houston are still active in making many contributions to the SNHS.

With Isabel Priestly's untimely death in 1946, several individuals continued to keep the YNHS and Blue Jay afloat. The 25-cent membership fee was increased to 50 cents, and the Regina Natural History Society (RNHS) and the Provincial Museum (Royal Saskatchewan Museum) offered assistance to the Yorkton naturalists and the publication of the Blue Jay.

However, in 1948, the newsletter's editors in Yorkton announced in the Blue Jay that "with this issue the Blue Jay, as the official organ of the YNHS, will cease to exist." Recognizing the importance of the Blue Jay, a group of RNHS members and others from around Saskatchewan offered to partner with the YNHS to continue the publication of the newsletter. A key condition from the Yorkton group was that the Blue Jay name be maintained for the new, joint publication.

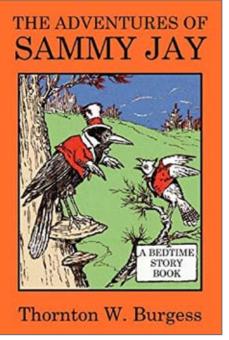
In 1949, after much planning and communication, a group of

naturalists and conservationists met in Regina to form the SNHS more commonly known as Nature Saskatchewan — and assumed responsibility for the publication of the Blue Jay. At this time, the first Executive and directors were also named from around the province.

Over the years, the format of the Blue Jay has changed, and this year brings a new change to the publication as well. In addition, SNHS priorities and programming have changed many times over the years, but the one constant throughout the past 65 years has been the name Blue Jay. Many younger members ask, "Where did the name Blue Jay come from?"

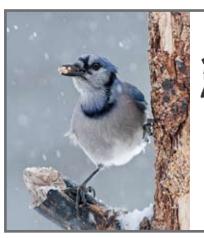
Mrs. Priestly explained in (Volume 1, No. 2) that the name originated with "Sammy (Blue) Jay" of Thornton W. Burgess' Bedtime Story Books, who carried the news to the "Little People of the Green Forest and Green Meadows."

As we move into another chapter in the history of Blue Jay, we hope you will embrace the new Blue Jay and continue to support Nature Saskatchewan. Suggestions and comments are always welcome, and equally welcome are articles and



stories for use in the Blue Jay. We would like to thank Kerry Hecker and Lowell Strauss for serving as editors of the Blue Jay for the past several years. We also welcome, and look forward to working with, Annie McLeod as the new Blue Jay editor.

*The information for this article comes from "The Isabel Priestly Legacy"; Saskatchewan Natural History Society 1949-1990. By Margaret Belcher. SNHS Special Publication No. 19. This very informative book is available at the Nature Saskatchewan office. 🖊





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74TH ANNUAL SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - 2015

Alan R. Smith & Randi Edmonds, Box 154, Avonlea, SK, S0H 0C0 alanrandi@sasktel.net

The Counts

The number of counts conducted rebounded from 88 to 93 this year. Three counts missed last year were revived while five new counts were added, more than compensating for a loss of three other counts. Perhaps encouraged by the balmy weather, party hours in the field (as opposed to feeder hours) rebounded from last year's 20-year low to about average; feeder hours remained about average

The Weather

Average minimum and maximum count temperatures this past count period (with 2014-15 records in brackets) were -13 to -9 C (-16 to -12 C), wind speeds 7 to 14 km/h (7 to 15 km/h), and snow depths 6 to 13 cm (9 to 21 cm).

As can be seen, winter temperatures were higher and snowfall lower compared to last year (winds speeds were about the same). There has been much debate as to how much of this change was due to El Niño and how much due to climate change – only time will tell. In either event, the warmer, drier weather had a profound effect on count results.

The Birds

The number of birds counted more than doubled over last year's 84,702 to 177,799, and is the highest total since the 2001 record high of 188,086 birds. Some of this increase is attributable to revival of the Coronach Count that contributed almost 34,000 birds, mostly waterfowl, but the rest is a result of the marked increase in the numbers of several species (see Population Trends).

The average number of species per count at 18.7 was slightly above the

1995-2013 average of 17.5, while the overall number of species (108 on count day plus seven count period species) was the second highest ever, eclipsed only by 116 species plus five count period species in 1997.

For the first time in 14 years, Saskatoon lost the crown for the most species on a count, albeit on a technicality. Both cities had 45 species on count day but Regina had seven as opposed to two additional species during the count period, so Regina wins the tie breaker.

Population Trends

The lack of snow is probably a major reason for the marked increase in several species (Table 7). The revived Coronach count notwithstanding, field-feeding waterfowl, namely the mallard and especially Canada geese, increased substantially. Perhaps in response to increased scavenging opportunities provided by the waterfowl, bald eagles were up 54 per cent over last year. Likewise, numbers of opencountry horned larks and snow buntings were up 524 and 99 per cent respectively.

Other species on the increase include a few of the finches whose populations are by nature cyclical. These include the pine grosbeak, both species of crossbills, and both redpolls.

The expansion of the Eurasian collared-dove seems to have resumed after seeming to stall last year. Four new localities were added: Duval, Grenfell, Last Mountain Lake NWA and Shamrock. After a steady decline, the number of house fiches returned to those enjoyed 10 years earlier. Six new localities were added for the species including Endeavor and

Nipawin, extending its winter range over 100 km to the northeast.

New Species

An astounding three new species were added to the all-time list: A king eider on the Ft. Qu'Appelle Count, a pine warbler on the Saskatoon Count (first seen on December 7, 2015 and still present March 15 of this year!), and a scarlet tanager during the count period at Regina. The CBC list now stands at an amazing 191 species.

Other Rarities

A Pacific wren during the count period on the Cypress Hills P.P. count. This bird is assumed to be a Pacific wren as it was seen very close to the first confirmed provincial record of the species on June 24, 2015. The previous record was a bird also assumed to be a Pacific wren on the Ft. Walsh Count on December 18, 1999.

A golden-crowned sparrow on the Morse count was the second of its kind for the provincial CBC – the previous record was of a bird seen during the count period at Broadview. The Morse bird was still present on March 10 of this year. A gray catbird also at Morse was only the third ever to be recorded on a Saskatchewan CBC.

Count areas and participants

(Names of compilers are in italics).

- 1. ARCHERWILL. Gerald Hiron, Susan Hiron, Audrey Hnetka, Perry Hnetka, Elaine Hughes, Dorothy Klettberg, Willie Klettberg, Judy Revoy, Stan Revoy.
- 2. AVONLEA. *Alan Smith*, Blaine Sudom.
- 3. BALGONIE. Jared Clarke, Ryan Dudragne, Bob Ewart, Fran Kerbs, Laurie Koepke, Maureen Lee, Jeannette Luther, *Brett Quiring*, Dan Sawatzky, Wendy Woodard, Mary Worel.

- 4. BIGGAR. Mary-Jo Danychuk, Tammy Danychuk, Lorrie Sielski, Larry Sutherland, *Guy Wapple*, Marguerite Wapple, Rob Wapple, Sandra Wapple.
- 5. BIRCH HILLS. Margaret Mareschal, *Maurice Mareschal*.
- 6. BORDEN-RADISSSON. Heather Giroux, Kyron Giroux, Ron Jensen, Jennipher Karst, *Stan Shadick*, Phil Taylor.
- 7. BRIERCREST-DRINKWATER. Randi Edmonds, *Alan Smith*.
- 8. BROADVIEW. Doug Boivin, Barb Weidl, *Don Weidl*.
- 9. CATER. Beverly Beland, *Orval Beland*.
- 10. CHATSWORTH S.D. Charles Dyck, Donna Dyck, Lisa Herminston, Robert Mess, Wionna Mess, *George Murray*, Laurie Murray, Marcel Pelletier, Kerri Rooke, Stewart Rooke, Carol Tangedal, Rudy Tangedal.
- 11. CHRISTOPHER LAKE. *Jeannie Walker*.
- 12. CHURCHBRIDGE B. Bernard Petracek, *Dennis Petracek*.
- 13. CLARK'S CROSSING. Dave Cook, Louise Cook, Lorne Duczek, Shelly Fisher, May Haga, Marilyn Haskins, Jeff Jensen, Ron Jensen, Gwen Klypak, Heney Klypak, Gordon Koshinsky, Margaret Koshinsky, Sylvia Raginski, Stan Shadick, Valerie Stacey, Marten Stoffel, Mary Toews, Guy Wapple, Trent Watts. *Michael Williams*.
- 14. CORONACH. *Ryan Dudragne*, Chris Harris, Bob Luterbach, Dan Sawatzky.
- 15. CRAVEN. Karl Beaulieu, Dave Cameron, Stephane Canévet, Rhonda Chartrand, Jim Cummings, Ryan Dudragne, Chris Harris, *Trevor Herriot*, Aoki Hiroyuki, Dale Hjertaas, Louise Holloway, Phil Holloway, Cheryl Kelln, Fran Kerbs, Laurie Koepke, Bob Luterbach, Kent Lynn, Barbara Mader, Kim Mann, Val Mann, Amelia McDonald, Jarrod McDonald, Barry Mitschke, Dave Phillips, Curtis Pollock, Beatriz Prieto, Ed Rodger, Jim Rollins,

- Nicholas Selinger, Brian Sterenberg, Jeanette Taylor, Robb Taylor, Mary Worel.
- 16. CREIGHTON. Karen Prokopetz, *Brenda Schmidt*, Harvey Schmidt, Terry Smith.
- 17. CROOKED LAKE. Jaxon Finkas, *Boyd Metzler*.
- 18. CROOKED RIVER. *Margaret Mehler*, Morley Mehler.
- 19. CYPRESS HILLS PROVINCIAL PARK (Centre Block). Dwight Dobson, Nancy Dobson, Angela Litke, Wayne Litke, Brynne Martin, Mimi Martin, Melody Nagel-Hisey, Jenny Thompson, Duncan Willis, Sam Willis.
- 20. DENHOLM. Beverly Beland, Gerard Beland, Linda Beland, *Orval Beland*.
- 21. DORINTOSH. Vicky Prior, *Joe Twidale*, Lorraine Twidale, Tim Wahl.
- 22. DUVAL. Ryan Dudragne, Linda Euteneier, Merv Hey, *Lloyd Saul*, Dan Sawatzky.
- 23. EASTEND. Roxie Binkley, Dwane Bristow, Kevin Bristow, Betty Davis, Robert Gebhardt, Allan Gorrier, Sherry Gorrie, June Higgins, Joan Hodgson, Harvey Johnson, Ed Sanford, Lorne Scott, Mary Thomson, Claire Topham, Heidi Topham, Jane Topham, Jack Wilkinson, Jan Wilkinson.
- 24. EBENEZER A. Nancy Bird, Ivanna Kozie, *Kenn Wood*, Sarah wood
- 25. EBENEZER B. Harvey Wegner.
- 26. ENDEAVOUR. Ed Harris, *Norman Harris*.
- 27. ESTEVAN. Barry Dies, Marilyn Dies, Craig Palmer, Larry Preddy, Reid Walton, Rose Walton, *Guy Wapple*.
- 28. ESTUARY NORTH. Cathy Cocks, *Dean Francis*.
- 29. FENTON. Carman Dodge.
- 30. FLORAL. Nick Saunders, *Guy Wapple*.
- 31. FORT QU'APPELLE. Jean Ashcroft, Peter Ashcroft, Shawn Baldock, Linda Banman, Ryan Dudragne, Mark

- Geremia, Alice Isfan, Jack Lowe, Bob Luterbach, Jean McKenna, Alan Mlazgar, Denise Mlazgar, Paul Paulhus, Wendy Paquin, Florence Pearpoint, Dan Sawatzky, *Keith Stephens*, Colette Stushnoff, Jean Vindevoghel, Marcel Vindevoghel.
- 32. GARDINER DAM. Ryan Dudragne, Greg Fenty, Jennifer Fenty, Jeff Jensen, Ron Jensen, Nick Saunders, Marten Stoffel, Phil Taylor, *Guy Wapple*.
- 33. GOOD SPIRIT LAKE. *Bill Anaka* and *Joyce Anaka (non-participating compilers)*, Dorothy Riesz, Ray Riesz, Lloyd Wilson, Marg Wilson.
- 34. GRASSLANDS NATIONAL PARK.
 Diana Charbros, Heather Facette,
 Dena Fischer, Samantha Fischer,
 Danielle Grant, Kathy Grant, Stepahno
 Liccioli, Kevin Moore, Joseph
 Naytowhow, Heather Olson, Nathan
 Young.
- 35. GRAYSON. Carina Helm, *Charles Helm*, Daniel Helm, Linda Helm, Jeanette Zimmer, Karl Zimmer.
- 36. GREENWATER. Bill Gudjuonson, Birdie Krzak, *Brian Shuya*, Helen Toovev.
- 37. GRENFELL. Ethel Reiger, Barb Weidl, *Don Weidl*.
- 38. HARRIS. Bev Barker, Russ Barker, Ron Jensen, Nick Saunders, Phil Taylor, *Guy Wapple*.
- 39. HAZLET. Laurent Dudragne, *Ryan Dudragne*.
- 40. HUDSON BAY. Judy Block, *John Daisley*, Agnes Lewellin, Dennis Reimer, Elvina Rumak, Bev Soules, Nancy Steinbachs John Zolkavich.
- 41. INDIAN HEAD. Kay Dixon, *Irv Escott*, David Gehl, Roberta Gehl, Sharon Hearn, Jim Jinks, Linda Jinks, Greta Kort, John Kort, Linda Kort, Peter Kort, Dan Loran, Dora Nichols, Raymond Schaeffer, Conrad Schreiner, Brian Scott, Glenn Scott, Lorne Scott, Chris Skinner, Fred Skinner, Donna Thompson, Sandra Vanderschaff, Shirley Vandershaaf, David Yakimoski.

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- 42. KENASTON. P. Lawrence Beckie.
- 43. KENOSEE LAKE. Jaxon Finkas, Boyd Metzler, John Pollock.
- 44. KETCHEN NORTH. Dallas Fairburn.
- 45. KINDERSLEY NORTH. Carla Harris, Jean Harris, Keith Harris.
- 46. KINLOCH. Don Forbes, Doreen Forbes, Carter Haroldson, Robert Haroldson, Clifford Logan, Doreen Wickstrom.
- 47. KUTAWAGAN LAKE. Valeriana Harris, Sheila Lamont.
- 48. KYLE. Glen Pederson, Marten Stoffel. Dan Zazelenchuk.
- 49. LA RONGE. Sid Robinson, John Schisler, Jan Shewchuk.
- 50. LAST MOUNTAIN LAKE NWA. Valeriana Harris, Sheila Lamont.
- 51. LEADER NORTH. Daisy Meyers.
- 52. LOVE TORCH RIVER. Theresa Belliveau, Hal Birkett, Joan Birkett, Bert Dalziel, Joan Dalziel, Kari Dalziel, Nora Dalziel, Sara Dalziel, Scott Edwards, Elaine Inskster, Roseanne Kirkpatrick, Eilene L'Heureux, Lynn Matthews, Lillian Nesset, Audrey Schrader, Eric Schrader, Josh Turtle, Leonard Turtle.
- 53. LUSELAND. Estelle Finley, Graeme Finley, Kim Finley, Liam Finley, Valerie
- 54. MEADOW LAKE. Bill Caldwell. Bob Wilson, Ian Wilson.
- 55. MOOSE JAW. Jeff Mander. Alan Smith.
- 56. MOOSE MOUNTAIN. Tanis Dionne, Doyle Thomas, Val Thomas.
- 57. MORSE. Ryan Dudragne, Noel Enns, Stella Enns, Joel Priebe, Ken Priebe, Myrna Priebe, Randy McColloch, Lori Wilson.
- 58. NIPAWIN. Carol Blenkin, Vi Budd, Joyce Christiansen, Bert Dalziel, Joan Dalziel, Sara Dalziel, Rick Douslin, Jennette LeCuyer, George Lidster, Jeri McCleary, Peter McCleary, Fred Olfert, Doug Phillips, Shirley Phillips, Jazzlyn Wales, Bill Walter, Elaine Walter.

- 59. NISBET FOREST, NORTHWEST. Sandra Jewell.
- 60. NISBET FOREST, WEST. Kim Clark.
- 61. ODESSA. Arden Curts, Denise Curts, Denny Curts.
- 62. OUTLOOK. Graham Thomson.
- 63. PIERCE LAKE. Marsha Hayward, Ted Hindmarch, Phil Shore.
- 64. PIKE LAKE. Adele Bittner, Donna Bruce, Dave Cook, Louise Cook, Yvonne Cuttle, Elsbeth Dormuth, Lorne Duczek, Bob Girvan, Bob Godwin, Rhea Gooding, Mike Grisdale, May Haga, Alice Hiller, Kodi Hiller, Greg Hutchings, Jeff Jensen, Ron Jensen, Joan Kohn, Rolf Kohn, Audrey MacKenzie, Bill MacKenzie, Murray Morgan, Keith Paul, Sylvia Raginski, Brant Remenda, Naomi Remenda, Marc Sabourin, Beverley Schmidt, Ljubica Stuglin, Phil Taylor, Michael Williams, Dwight Young, Nancy Young.
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- 68. QU'APPELLE VALLEY DAM. May Haga, Stan Shadick, Carl Siemens, Hollyce Seimens, Marten Stoffel, Guy Wapple, Michael Williams.
- 69. RAYMORE. Valeriana Harris, Sheila Lamont.
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- 72. ROSCOMMON S.D. Bernice Althouse, Kate Althouse, Ruby Finnie, Brian Irving, Joan Lillibo, Peggy Olson, Dianne Sloan, Graham Sloan, Marguerite Sloan.
- 73. ROULEAU. Allen McGratten, Noreen McGratten, Patricia Sterzuk.
- 74. ROUND LAKE (Prince Albert Area). Crystal Frenette.
- 75. ROUND LAKE (Qu'Appelle Valley). Boyd Metzler, Mary Ward, Pat Ward.
- 76. SALTCOATS. Arden Bradford, Donna Brygider, M. Easton, Walter Farquharson, Dave Herron, Ron Knudsen, Fern Mckay, B. McLaren, D. Westburg.
- 77. SASKATCHEWAN LANDING PROVINCIAL PARK. Glen Pederson, Marten Stoffel, Dan Zazelenchuk.
- 78. SASKATCHEWAN RIVER FORKS. Carman Dodge, Don Weidl (nonparticipating compiler).
- 79. SASKATOON. Alexander Acton, Bruce Acton, Allison Baudru, Lou Baudru, Neva Bayliss, Jim Beveridge, Bruce Boldt, Jacquie Christensen, Louise Cook, Ewen Coxworth, Yvonne Cuttle, Laurel Duczek, Lorne Duczek, Anne Dzus, Marlene Dzus, Melanie Elliott, Joshua Erickson, Joan Feather, Lesley Fell, David Forbes, Cathy Fry,

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- 81. SHAMROCK. Hugh Henry, Milton Knudsen, Iris McNeill, Darwin Menke, Ken Priebe, Myrna Priebe.
- 82. SNOWDEN. Esther Chamberlin, Gus Fomradas, Don Friesen, Ed Hagel, *Irene Hagel*, Lillian Kuzniar, Linda Patton, George Pickett, Jack Pickett, Bill Thompson, Tim Thompson, Irene White.
- 83. SPINNEY HILL. Ed Driver.
- 84. SPRUCE HOME. Keith Walters.
- 85. SQUAW RAPIDS. Ryan Dudragne, Shelly Fisher, Valeriana Harris, Sheila Lamont.
- 86. SWIFT CURRENT. Karl Bazin, Sara Bazin, Jacquie Bolton, Stacy Bolton, Eunice Cammell, Norris Currie, Laurent Dudragne, Mary Ann Dudragne, Ryan Dudragne, Arnie Ens, Lorna Fast, Dave Green, Esther Green, Katie Hagman, Norma Hain, Hugh Henry, Kim Houghtaling, Vincent Houghtaling, Leonard Howes,

Lois Howes, Stephanie Kadduck, Tommy Kirk, Verna Lynn Knipfel, Dot Letkeman, Rita McLaughlin, Kevin Moore, Janet Payne, Harold Steppuhn, Sue Steppuhn, Irene Stinson, Lloyd Thiessen, Sharlane Toole, Kae Walters.

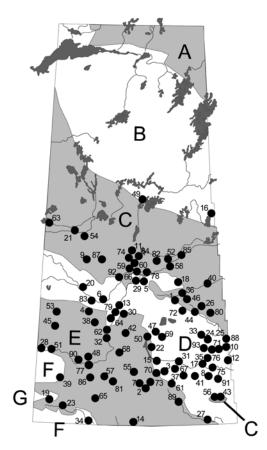
- 87. THICKWOOD HILLS-SPIRITWOOD. Margie Fast, Kay Willson, Philip Wilson.
- 88. TOGO. Betty Burback, Del Burback, Donna Dewores, Barb Elsasser, Doug Elsasser, Amanda Harper, Lyle Harper, Ed King, Louise King, William Koreliuk, Karen Leis, Barb Leppky, Jim Leppky, Phil Rezansoff, Mabel Skinner, Marty Skinner, Zane Woodworth, Zoria Woodworth.
- 89. WEYBURN. Cecile Burr, Tanis Dionne, John Ferrier, Dale Huff, Sandi Huff, Cyril Marcotte, Charlotte Payak, Don Payak, Joe Stephaniuk, Doyle Thomas, Val Thomas, Kim Thorson, Myrt Thorson, Dorothy Whitell, John Whitell.
- 90. WHITE BEAR. Glen Pederson, Dan Zazelenchuk.
- 91. WHITEWOOD. Ken Aldous. Carole Armstrong, Cindy Ashfield, Joe Ashfield, Paul Ashfield, Grant Erickson, Joyce Kydd, Florence Luhtala, Sarah Manbourg, Boyd Metzler, Harry Michell, Marilyn Mitchell, Donna Mohr, Margaret Nieminen, Paul Nieminen, John Pollock, Tony Saltasuk, Carol Sawatzki, Doug Shepherd, Dawn Vennard, Diane Veresh.
- 92. WINGARD. Elizabeth Beam, John Beam, Rebecca Beam.
- 93.YORKTON. Allan Bailey, Crystal Bailey, Brian Beck, Lorna Bright, Vern Brown, Mae Ann Chilman, Warren Crossman, Jim Dicker, Gordon Flett, Joyce Gardner, Bob Graham, Lance Irvine, Sheldon Knoll, George Maben, Matt Montain, Gloria Rathgeber, Dorothy Riesz, Ray Riesz, Don Ruf, Geoff Rushowick, Dale Sharpe, Dorothy Skene, Stan Williams.



King eider. Photo credit: Annie McLeod

Figure 1. **Location of 2015 counts**

(numbers correspond to those in text under Count Areas and participants).



Natural Vegetation zones*

A Subartic Woodland

B. Northern Boreal forest

C. Southern Boreal Forest

D. Aspen Parkland

E. Mixed Prairie F. Dry Mixed Prairie

G. Cypress Hills

* Adapted from: Thorpe, J. 1999. Natural Vegetation. P. 133 in Atlas of Saskatchewan (K. Fung, ed). Univ. of Sask., Saskatoon

Table 1.1. Weather and Snow Cover.

LOCALITY	DATE	MIN TEMP (C)	MAX TEMP (OC)	MIN WIND (KM/ HR)	MAX WIND (KM/HR)	MIN SMOW (CM)	MAX SNOW (CM)	SKY AM	SKY PM
Archerwill	30 Dec 2015	-20	-12	11	14	10	10	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Avonlea	28 Dec 2015	-12	-9	0	2	4	4	overcast	cloudy
Balgonie	3 Jan 2016	-11	-3	5	15	0	5	clear	clear
Biggar	27 Dec 2015	-20	-15	10	20	0	15	overcast	overcast
Birch Hills	2 Jan 2016	-7	-3	5	10	10	15	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Borden-Radisson	16 Dec 2015	-7	-6	22	40	1	3	cloudy	partly cloudy
Briercrest-Drinkwater	2 Jan 2016	-5	-5	2	2	0	5	clear	clear
Broadview	24 Dec 2015	-13	-10	2	5	4	4	partly cloudy	cloudy
Cater	1 Jan 2016	-17	-5	0	15	5	10	clear	clear
Chatsworth S.D.	4 Jan 2016	-14	-5	10	15	10	20	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Christopher Lake	23 Dec 2015	-13	-10	0	0	5	7	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Churchbridge B	31 Dec 2015	-15		10	15	15	20	mostly clear	mostly clear
Clark's Crossing	19 Dec 2015	-12	-10	5	22	2	15	cloudy	cloudy
Coronach	20 Dec 2015	-17	-4	0	15	0	5	mod. fog	light fog
Craven	19 Dec 2015	-11	-7	12	19	0	5	cloudy	mostly clear
Creighton	2 Jan 2016	-3	-1	18	29	55	60	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Crooked Lake	21 Dec 2015	-7	-3	2	5	1	5	light fog	overcast
Crooked River	29 Dec 2015	-11	-7	2	5	10	15	clear	clear
Cypress Hills P.P.	30 Dec 2015	-3	0	5	8	3	5	light fog	partly cloudy
Denholm	25 Dec 2015	-22	-16	0	5	0	2	clear	clear
Dorintosh	23 Dec 2015	-15	-9	0	3	1	5	cloudy	mod. snow
Duval	3 Jan 2016	-8	-12	0	15	3	35	clear	mostly clear
Eastend	4 Jan 2016	-9	0	0	0	0	11	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Ebenezer A	30 Dec 2015	-18	-10	5	13		- ''	clear	clear
Ebenezer B	31 Dec 2015	-8	-6	15	20	20		clear	clear
Endeavour	21 Dec 2015	-13	-8	2	5	20	25	partly cloudy	overcast
Estevan	1 Jan 2016	-8	-2	15	22	0	10	clear	partly cloudy
	4 Jan 2016	-2	-2	0	22	10	10	mostly clear	mostly clear
Estuary North Fenton	5 Jan 2016	-17	-13	2		6	10	clear	clear
					10				
Floral	15 Dec 2015	-6	-5	10	18	0	10	overcast	overcast
Fort Qu'Appelle	18 Dec 2015	-15	-12	13	16	2	6	overcast	cloudy
Gardiner Dam	21 Dec 2015	-6	-6	10	15	0	10	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Good Spirit Lake	31 Dec 2015	-4	-4	2	25	15	25	mostly clear	mostly clear
Grasslands N.P.	17 Dec 2015	-14	-7	3	9	0	10	overcast	overcast
Grayson	27 Dec 2015	-23	-12	0	15	1	10	mostly clear	overcast
Greenwater	3 Jan 2016	-14	-6	4	4	25	30	clear	clear
Grenfell	29 Dec 2015	-17	-15	2	2	4	4	overcast	partly cloudy
Harris	14 Dec 2015	-3	-2	10	20	0	10	overcast	overcast
Hazlet	26 Dec 2015	-20	-18	5	10	2	15	partly cloudy	overcast
Hudson Bay	27 Dec 2015	-14	-7	5	10	15	20		cloudy
Indian Head	28 Dec 2015	-11	-6	0	0	2	2	cloudy	cloudy
Kenaston	14 Dec 2015	-5	-3	2	2	8	8	heavy fog	mod fog
Kenosee Lake	22 Dec 2015	-10	-6	0	5	2	10	overcast	overcast
Ketchen North	26 Dec 2015	-27	-17	2	5	17	22	overcast	light snow
Kindersley North		-26	-21	2	2	3	10	clear	clear
Kinloch	30 Dec 2015	-18	-9	12	15	15	17	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Kutawagan Lake	27 Dec 2015	-14	-11	20	30	10	20	overcast	overcast

Table 1.2. Weather and Snow Cover.

LOCALITY	DATE	MIN TEMP	MAX TEMP	MIN WIND (KM/	MAX WIND	MIN SMOW	MAX SNOW	SKY AM	SKY PM
		(C)	(OC)	WIND (KM/ HR)	(KM/HR)	(CM)	(CM)		
Kyle	17 Dec 2015	-15	-9	6	19	0	4	overcast	clear
La Ronge	28 Dec 2015	-18	-16	0	5	10	10	overcast	light snow
LMLNWA	29 Dec 2015	-14	-12	6	20	10	20	light snow	overcast
Leader North	29 Dec 2015	-13	-10	0	15	2	5	partly cloudy	
Love-Torch River	27 Dec 2015	-31	-21	10	15	15	20	clear	partly cloudy
Luseland	26 Dec 2015	-27	-18	0	10	2	10	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Meadow Lake	26 Dec 2015	-21	-15	5	2				clear
Moose Jaw	16 Dec 2015	-7	-5	30	30	5	5	overcast	mostly clear
Moose Mountain	4 Jan 2016	-9	-2	2	5	2	4	partly cloudy	partly cloudy
Morse	23 Dec 2015	-12	-9	2	5	5	30	mod. fog	light fog
Nipawin	23 Dec 2015	-16	-12	2	5	20	20	clear	clear
Nisbet Forest NW	26 Dec 2015	-18	-18	5	20	0	9	light snow	mostly clear
Nisbet Forest West	1 Jan 2016	0	-3	0	8	2	10	clear	clear
Odessa	28 Dec 2015	-10	-3	20	30	5	8	light fog	cloudy
Outlook	1 Jan 2016	-6	-4	20	27	0	5		
Pierce Lake	30 Dec 2015	-18	-11	6	13	10	20	clear	clear
Pike Lake	2 Jan 2016	-13	-2	0	20	2	20	clear	clear
Ponteix	28 Dec 2015	-12	-7	10	20	0	5	cloudy	partly cloudy
Prince Albert	20 Dec 2015	-15	-12			10	10	overcast	overcast
Qu'Appelle	30 Dec 2015	-14	-11	6	11	4	6	overcast	partly cloudy
Qu'Appelle Dam	20 Dec 2015	-14	-8	5	15	2	15	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Raymore	25 Dec 2015	-29	-23	25	35	10	15	mostly clear	overcast
Regina	27 Dec 2015	-21	-12	30	40	0	4	partly cloudy	cloudy
Rokeby	20 Dec 2015	-10	-15	15	15	5	10	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Roscommon S.D.	28 Dec 2015	-16	-12	20	25	15	20	cloudy	overcast
Rouleau	28 Dec 2015	-12	-9	2	5	1	5	overcast	partly cloudy
Round Lake (PA)	5 Jan 2016	-7		4				mostly clear	
Round Lake (Q.V.)	14 Dec 2015	-6	-2	0	5	2	8	heavy fog	light fog
Saltcoats	26 Dec 2015	-29	-14	30	30	12	16	mostly clear	
Sask. Landing P.P.	4 Jan 2016	-9	-2	2	5	0	4	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Sask. River Forks	3 Jan 2016	-13	-10	2	5	10	10	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Saskatoon	26 Dec 2015	-25	-18	12	17	5	15	mostly clear	clear
Sawyer Lake	26 Dec 2015	-23	-17	15	35	20		,	partly cloudy
Shamrock	28 Dec 2015	-14	-14	2	22	4	8	overcast	overcast
Snowden	4 Jan 2016	-10	-5	2	5	1	18	clear	clear
Spinney Hill	21 Dec 2015	-10	-8	5	20	0	20	overcast	partly cloudy
Spruce Home	17 Dec 2015	-12	-10	2	5	5	7	cloudy	cloudy
Squaw Rapids	31 Dec 2015	-11	-6	15	30	10	30	mostly clear	partly cloudy
Swift Current	19 Dec 2015	-4	-2	10	20	5	10	partly cloudy	mostly clear
Thickwood-Spiritwood	18 Dec 2015	-14	-14	12	15	5	8	overcast	overcast
Togo	5 Jan 2016	-11		10	15	15	20	clear	clear
Weyburn	19 Dec 2015	-14	-11	8	10	2	4	cloudy	light snow
White Bear	31 Dec 2015	-14	-6	5	35	0	4	mostly clear	mostly clear
Whitewood	28 Dec 2015	-17	-15	20	29	6	14	overcast	overcast
Wingard	4 Jan 2016	-10	-15	20	23	0	14	Overcast	Overcast
Yorkton	29 Dec 2015	1.4	-14	10	13	F	30	overcast	cloudy
AVERAGES	29 Dec 2015	-14 -13	-14 -9	10 7	14	5 6	13	overcast	cloudy

Table 2.1. Effort and Habitat Coverage. Wild Fruit: p=poor, f=fair, g=good, e=excellent.

							1			_				Ĺ	_					
LOCALITY	PARTICPANTS	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	SHIELD, BOG,SWAMP	WILD FRUIT CROP
Archerwill	9	4.5	2.0	32	0.5	30.0		25						50	25					р
Avonlea	2	13.0	4.5	102	2.0	0.5		LJ	20				5	30	10	35				۲
Balgonie	11	20.0	7.9	485	15.0	2.0				15				50	10	25				f
Biggar	8	12.0	6.8	376	10.3	4.0				19				43	10	28				f
Birch Hills	2	1.0	0.5	94	8.7	1.5			5	40			5	35	5	5		5		f
Borden-Radisson	6	2.0	4.0	279	10.0	0.0				55				33		40	5			e
Briercrest-Drinkwater	2	2.0	0.5	135	4.5	0.0				33				80		20				
Broadview	3	2.0	1.0	145	6.5	2.0			20	35		5		25	5	10				р
Cater	2	0.0	0.0	190	7.5	2.0	5	10	5	15		,	5	50	5	5				g
Chatsworth S.D.	12	3.0	9.0	80	3.0	2.0	,	10	,	80		10	5	50	5	,				9
Christopher Lake	12	15.0	3.0	0	0.0	0.0		60		30		10	3		3	10				
Churchbridge B	2	0.0	0.0	3	0.0	8.5		00		30		5			95	10				p
_				574					1	10	7		_	10		25	1	4		р
Clark's Crossing	20	26.0	14.5	-	30.5	4.0			1	16	,	3	2	18	23	25	1	4		g
Coronach	4	4.5	2.8	222	6.7	0.0				25		15	15	55	5	5	5			е
Craven	33	23.0	12.0	654	23.0	13.5	20	10		25		5	5	15	20	25	5		20	g f
Creighton	4	7.0	3.0	230	12.0	3.0	20	10	-	20					-	40	20		30	
Crooked Lake	2	2.0	1.0	140	3.5	0.0		40	5	20				40	5	50	20			f
Crooked River	2	3.0	1.0	0	0.0	6.0	40	40				10		40	20					f
Cypress Hills P.P.	10	8.0	5.0	15	1.0	0.0	40	40	8	40	-	10	-	70	2	-				f
Denholm	4	0.0	0.0	234	7.0	1.5				10	5		5	70	5	5				g
Dorintosh	4	20.0	6.0	60	2.0	2.0		60					_	40						g
Duval	5	9.5	5.0	288	10.8	0.0				30	15		5	30	10	10				е
Eastend	18	15.0	15.8	238	10.5	2.0		5		20	50		5	5		15	<1			р
Ebenezer A	4	10.0	8.0	30	6.0	8.0					60				5			35		f
Ebenezer B	1	0.0	0.0	38	3.0	4.0		15			20	30	30		5					
Endeavour	2	1.0	0.5	66	3.5	3.0				60					30	10				р
Estevan	7	10.0	5.8	173	5.0	5.0								15	8	23	21	33		f
Estuary North	2	4.0	2.0	4	3.0	0.0			50			30			20					р
Fenton	1	0.0	0.0	88	3.0	0.0				10	10			65		15				р
Floral	2	7.0	3.8	197	5.8	0.0				29				43	10	18				g
Fort Qu'Appelle	20		22.5	200						25	20		10	20	5	20	<1			е
Gardiner Dam	10	30.0	18.5	413	14.5	0.0				5				41	10	11	30	3		р
Good Spirit Lake	4	0.0	0.0	145	6.8	5.0				30			40		5	25				f
Grasslands N.P.	11	0.0	0.0	496	14.8	0.0						70	5	15		5		5		
Grayson	6	7.0	2.0	110	4.0	3.0			5	35	5		5	10	15	5	10	10		р
Greenwater	4	3.0	2.0	95	5.5	10.5	5	27	7	12				40	5	4				е
Grenfell	3	1.0	0.5	135	6.0	2.0			15	15		5	15	25	10	15				р
Harris	6	17.0	9.8	180	7.0	2.0				21				39	10	30				f
Hazlet	2	1.0	0.8	221	6.5	0.0					>1	10		80	5	5				f
Hudson Bay	8	3.0	1.0	0	0.0	8.0		40							20	40				f
Indian Head	24	34.0	6.0	246	8.0	24.0	5	9						75	5	5	1			f
Kenaston	1	0.0	0.0	169		0.0								75		25				
Kenosee Lake	3	2.0	1.5	149	3.0	1.0			30	10	5		5			50				f
Ketchen North	1	1.0	1.5	50	2.5	5.0				30			20	20	20	10				
Kindersley North	3																			
Kinloch	6	3.0	4.0	84	4.0	0.0	10	30	30	10					20					g
Kutawagan Lake	2	0.5	0.3	196.7	7.0	0.5				10	5	5		60	10	10				f

Table 2.2. Effort and Habitat Coverage. Wild Fruit: p=poor, f=fair, g=good, e=excellent.

LOCALITY	PARTICPANTS	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	SHIELD, BOG,SWAMP	WILD FRUIT CROP
Kyle	3	4.0	2.0	242	6.6	0.0					5	5	5	35	35	10		5		f
La Ronge	3	3.5	3.5	47	4.5	1.5	10	40								40	10			р
LMLNWA	2	1.0	0.5	198	8.5	0.5				10		10	5	45	5	25				р
Leader North	1	4.0	3.0	20	2.0	2.0						50		40	5		5			р
Love-Torch River	17	2.0	2.0	302	12.0	33.0	20	10		50					10	10				f
Luseland	5	9.0	4.0	347	10.5	2.0				50	10	5	5	20	5	5				f
Meadow Lake	3	5.0		121		4.0		50						30		20				g
Moose Jaw	2	11.0	4.3	145	25.0	0.2						5	5	20		55	10	5		
Moose Mountain	3	0.0	0.0	85	5.0	0.0		60				2		29	3	6				f
Morse	9	4.0	1.5	576	2.5	2.0							3	90	7					f
Nipawin	17	2.0	1.0	151	6.0	28.5	15	5		15				20	10	30	5			g
Nisbet Forest NW	1	2.0	2.0	0	0.0	1.0		20		30					50					f
Nisbet Forest West	1	2.0	2.0	110	2.5	2.0	10	30		10				40		10				
Odessa	3	0.0	0.0		15.0	3.0				10	10	30	30	10	10					f
Outlook	1	2.0	1.0	70	3.0	0.5														
Pierce Lake	3	1.0	1.0	80	5.0	0.0	10	35	30	10				10			5			g
Pike Lake	33	28.2	28.8	408	30.9	4.0														f
Ponteix	1	2.0	1.0	275	7.0	0.0				<1		10	20	60	5	5	<1	<1		р
Prince Albert	18	22.1	10.7	384	18.2	9.5														р
Qu'Appelle	10	6.0	3.0	316	9.5	3.5				60	5		5	20	5	5				f
Qu'Appelle Dam	7	7.0	6.2	347	11.3	4.0				44				7	10	27	6	6		f
Raymore	2	0.5	0.3	174	9.1	0.8				25			5	30	15	25				f
Regina	47	105.2	45.7	772	29.3	10.0			3	10	8		7	20	5	45		2		f
Rokeby	12	0.0	0.0	120	6.0	15.0		2						95	3					
Roscommon S.D.	9	0.5	1.0	82	6.0	28.0				30				60	10					g
Rouleau	3	0.0	0.0	175	7.0	0.0								90	5	5				
Round Lake (PA)	1	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	3.0		50					20					30		р
Round Lake (Q.V.)	3	1.0	2.0	188	5.0	3.0				15				5	60	20				f
Saltcoats	9	4.0	2.0	6	3.0	0.0				100										f
Sask. Landing P.P.	3	5.0	1.5	374	7.5	0.0				5		10		45	15			25		f
Sask. River Forks	1	1.0	0.5	72	3.0	0.0	15	20	20	15			5	20	5					р
Saskatoon	81	77.6	45.7	746	49.4	109.0		1		6	3	2	1	6	4	70	3	4		f
Sawyer Lake	2	0.0	0.0	24	4.0	1.0		10		50				30	10					f
Shamrock	6	2.0	1.5	331	15.0	1.0						3	5	80	7	5				
Snowden	12		2.0	124		4.5		10						30	50	10				р
Spinney Hill	1	1.0		146		0.0														р
Spruce Home	1	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	2.0		90						10						
Squaw Rapids	4	2.5	2.3	248	11.4	0.2		70						5	5		20			р
Swift Current	33	53.5	30.5	453	27.5	8.0							20	10	68			2		
Thickwood-Spiritwood	3	2.8	1.1	146	4.6	2.0		20		15			25	25	5	5		5		р
Togo	19	0.0	0.0	70	1.8	0.0	5	15	15			5	20	40						р
Weyburn	15	0.0	0.0	306	12.0	3.0			2		2	5	6	60	10	15				р
White Bear	2	3.0	1.5	190	7.3							15	5	50	30					f
Whitewood	21	5.5	5.0	465	15.0	36.0				10				5	15	70				р
Wingard	3																			
Yorkton	23	4.5	1.5	122	7.5	17.0				50						50				g

Table 3.1. Species found on 6 or more counts; () = seen during count period (CP).

iable 3.1. Specie	.5 1	MIII						<u> </u>	113,	<u> </u>			ч	5	,	ч	. PC		u (\	/·				
	ARCHERWILL 30 DEC 2015	AVONLEA 28 DEC 2015	BALGONIE 3 JAN 2016	BIGGAR 27 DEC 2015	BIRCH HILLS 2 JAN 2016	BORDEN-RADISSON 16 DEC 2015	IERCREST AN 2016	BROADVIEW 24 DEC 2015	CATER 1 JAN 2016	CHATSWORTH S.D. 4 JAN 2016	CHRISTOPHER LAKE 23 DEC 2015	CHURCHBRIDGE B 31 DEC 2015	CLARK'S CROSSING 19 DEC 2015	CORONACH 20 DEC 2015	CRAVEN 19 DEC 2015	CREIGHTON 2 JAN 2016	CROOKED LAKE 21 DEC 2015	CROOKED RIVER 29 DEC 2015	CYPRESS HILLS P.P. 30 DEC 2015	DENHOLM 25 DEC 2015	DORINTOSH 23 DEC 2015	DUVAL 3 JAN 2016	EASTEND 4 JAN 2016	EBENEZER A 30 DEC 2015
SPECIES	ARC 30 E	AVC 28 [BAL 3 JA	BIG 27 I	BIR 2 JA	BOF 16 [BRII 2 JA	BRC 24 [AT PAT	ATA 4 JA	35 23 12 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13	I I I I	CLA 19 [20F	RA 19 [CRE 2 JA	CRC 21 [CR C 29 [CYP 30 [DEN 25 [DO 23 [3.JA	EAS 4 JA	EBE 30 [
Canada Goose						35								22790	5		698						(1)	
Mallard													320	9741	8		96						(.,	
Redhead														37	1		50							
Lesser Scaup															4									
Common Goldeneye													58	10	32									
Common Merganser													30	3	J.									
Gray Partridge			21	24		6							29	12						1				
Ring-necked Pheasant														2									26	
Ruffed Grouse	1				4			3	3	8		1		_	1			2	(1)					
Sharp-tailed Grouse	(1)	2	25	35		15		11					34	19	24	5		_	5			35	31	1
Bald Eagle	(1)	_		33		2		(1)					8	1	2	,	2		3	(1)		33	J.	3
Northern Goshawk	(1)					_		(1)					U						1	(1)			(1)	
Rough-legged Hawk			1					1							2		7		(2)	(1)			(1)	
Golden Eagle		1	'	1				'						1	1		2		1	1			1	
Rock Pigeon	5	29	144	131	42	129	26	44	6				368	10	104	33				56		91	6	45
Eurasian Collared-Dove	,	16	144	35	42	123	6	444	U				1	57	3	33				30		5	27	43
	,	10	1	33			О	,							3								21	
Mourning Dove	2	1	1	2				2	1			1	1	2	٠,				(1)	1		1	2	1
Great Horned Owl	(1)	1	3	2			_		- 1			1	9		2				(1)				3	
Snowy Owl	(1)	2	(1)	2	-	_	2	2		•			2	7	_			_		1		1	2	
Downy Woodpecker		(1)	7	2	5	3		3	4	9		2	10	1	9	_	4	2	3	1	1	4	7	
Hairy Woodpecker	3	1	1	5	8	1		4	2	10	1	2	7		10	2	2	3	(1)	3	2	2	2	3
Northern Flicker	(4)			1		2							2		1							(1)		
Pileated Woodpecker	(1)										1													
Merlin														1										
Northern Shrike	1			(1)		2				1					1		1					3	1	
Gray Jay	5		(-)					_	1							10	_				2			
Blue Jay	13		(1)		1	3		2	10	12	2		4		48		1	3			8		1	
Black-billed Magpie	8	19	134	101	37	95	10	31	33	20		5	221	1	103	44	8	5	5	83	2	46	98	13
American Crow															3							(2)		
Common Raven	9		41	53	14	157		23	49	10	2	1	191		59	192	19	2	4	17	1	14	5	10
Horned Lark		4	3	1			72							428								6	4	
Black-capped Chickadee	18	1	93	20	18	12		14	24	44	30	28	136		170	22	45	10	50	8	24	16	17	12
Boreal Chickadee	(1)										2					5								
Red-breasted Nuthatch				11		3							3		1				20				8	
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	2	4	1	2			1	3	6	(4)	1	3		23			1				1		4
Brown Creeper			1	1		1																		
Golden-crowned Kinglet			1					3											1					
American Robin				1				1	1				1	1	22							2	(1)	
European Starling		56	121	3		30	2	20	20				183	32	205					18		11		
Bohemian Waxwing		1	13	(25)	44	44		85					67		134				(10)			148	50	
Snow Bunting	(1000)		225	1		2		200	4	25			24		2							412	12	
Dark-eyed Junco		3	5	1		1		5		3			2		14							(1)	3	
Pine Grosbeak	95	(4)	7	3	18	14		5	51		17		21		5	135		7	5		27	30	3	5
House Finch		2	53	61				(2)					52	5	3								28	
Red Crossbill			24	18				(4)					21											
White-winged Crossbill				4		5			15				31										25	
Common Redpoll	174	8	385	766	137	611	50	714	216	219	56	36	555	168	750	125	139	8	2	611	30	277	22	36
Hoary Redpoll	4			5	2	14		(3)	6				5			26				(1)				
Pine Siskin	6											12			5			9				4		
Evening Grosbeak	47								28		22					33		7				1		
House Sparrow	6	325	652	349	175	525	125	230	83	171			1305	361	296	83	15		(7)	76		502	290	48
TOTAL BIRDS COUNT DAY	398	475	1975	1638	507	1714	293	1402	560	544	133	89	4283	33676	2091	740	1039	59	100	878	97	1621	673	181
TOTAL BIRDS ONLY IN CP	1006	5	2	26	0	0	0	12	0	0	4	0	0		0	0	0	0	23	4	0	4	3	0
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	17	19	25	28	14	25	8	21	20	14	9	10	34		38	16	14	12	12	14	9	24	25	12
TOTAL SPECIES ONLY IN CP	7	2	2	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	0		0	0	0	0	7	4	0	3	3	0
TOTAL STECIES ONLITTING	/		- 2		-	- 0	U			-				0		U	- 0	,	· ·	ı T	0	ا د		

Table 3.2. Species found on 6 or more counts; () = seen during count period (CP).

	EBENEZER B 31 DEC 2015	ENDEAVOUR 21 DEC 2015	N. 016	ESTUARY NORTH 4 JAN 2016	ا 016	FLORAL 15 DEC 2015	FORT QU'APPELLE 18 DEC 2015	GARDINER DAM 21 DEC 2015	GOOD SPIRIT LAKE 31 DEC 2015	GRASSLANDS N.P. 17 DEC 2015	GRAYSON 27 DEC 2015	GREENWATER 3 JAN 2016	GRENFELL 29 DEC 2015	HARRIS 14 DEC 2015	HAZLET 26 DEC 2015	HUDSON BAY 27 DEC 2015	INDIAN HEAD 28 DEC 2015	KENASTON 14 DEC 2015	KENOSEE LAKE 22 DEC 2015	KETCHEN 26 DEC 2015	KINDERSLEY NORTH 26 DEC 2015	NLOCH DEC 2015	KUTAWAGAN LAKE 27 DEC 2015	/LE DEC 2015
	ENEZ	IDEA DEC	ESTEVAN 1 JAN 2016	TUAR JAN 2	FENTON 5 JAN 2016	ORAL	ORT O	ARDIN DEC	OOD S	ASSI DEC	AAYSC DEC	SEENI JAN 2	SENFE DEC	ARRIS DEC	AZLET DEC	JDSO DEC	DIAN	NAS1 DEC	NOSE	TCHE	NDER DEC	NLOC DEC	JTAW DEC	/LE DEC
SPECIES	31E	2F		ES 4	F.	_			Ω₩	₽,	₽ 7	<u>6</u> ~	ម៉ូន	3 4	7 7 8 7	ΞZ	8≥	₩ 2	五2	五2	≥8	₹8 8	₹Z	<u></u>
Canada Goose			9615			6	1737	1667			110						12							
Mallard			617				89	3545		4	57						150							
Redhead							4	5									1							
Lesser Scaup			2				5	10									5							
Common Goldeneye			62				145	311									7							
Common Merganser			3					118																
Gray Partridge							(1)	37		67				12	65		8	11			75	(1)	11	67
Ring-necked Pheasant			96	8						62														
Ruffed Grouse		2					(1)		3		2	5				(6)	3			10		5		
Sharp-tailed Grouse			4	102				24	1	66				42	49		21		1				8	109
Bald Eagle		3	1	1			11	63		3	1			3		(1)	6		1			(2)		
Northern Goshawk												1												1
Rough-legged Hawk							2																	
Golden Eagle				1				2		1				1	2						1			1
Rock Pigeon	2	8	107		5	263	19	197		7	25		71	62	88		153	4	7	1	60		25	83
Eurasian Collared-Dove			30	2			8	7		(4)			10	10			6							12
Mourning Dove																								(1)
Great Horned Owl			1	2		2	(1)	6		1	1		1	1	2		2	1			2		3	8
Snowy Owl				1			,,	6						6	2						4			8
Downy Woodpecker		3	8	1	1	6	24	6	3		2	5	2	4		3	22		1	4		2	2	1
Hairy Woodpecker		1	5	2		2	6	1	4		_	5	_	2		5	19		5	3		4		(1)
Northern Flicker			2	3		_	-	•						1					_	_				(1)
Pileated Woodpecker			-	1					(1)		2					(1)								(.,
Merlin			1	·					(.,		_					(.,								(1)
Northern Shrike			•			1					1	(1)	1	2										(1)
Gray Jay		2				, i					·	4				1						(1)		
Blue Jay	1	7	3	7	2	2	15		6		2	22	1			35	19		12	11		16		
Black-billed Magpie	7	19	20	29	33	53	103	145	29	30	36	55	15	55	40	(1)	54	8	30	24	35	17	36	85
American Crow	2	13			33	33	103	113		30	30	33		33	10	(1)	31		30		33	.,	30	03
Common Raven	21	41	6	1	6	27	136	61	16		24	27	21	17	4	191	125	1	20	97	1	32	13	11
Horned Lark	21	41	0	'	U	17	2	6	10	27	24	21	21	8	426	131	8	•	20	31		32	5	6
Black-capped Chickadee	6	28	17	8	10	37	148	16	76	21	30	34	10	18	420	43	147		60	9		29	ر	4
Boreal Chickadee	U	20	17	0	10	31	140	10	70		30	34	10	10		٠,	147		00	3		23		4
Red-breasted Nuthatch			4	1		2			1					3		2	22		1					
White-breasted Nuthatch			5	'	1	2	23		3		1	2	2				13		3	(2)		3		1
		8	2		'		23		3		1	3	2	2		8	13		3	(2)		3		1
Brown Creeper								1																
Golden-crowned Kinglet			2	2			2	6						4		(4)					(2)			(4)
American Robin			3	2			2	450			20		22	10	43	(1)	4-	(2)			(2)			(1)
European Starling		6	55	84	2	25	64	158			30		32	10	13		47	(2)			(47)		6	3
Bohemian Waxwing	43	(20)	04	5	40	25	354	96		co			7	207	COAF	100	45	000		350	(17)	225	440	700
Snow Bunting	12	(30)	91	50	5	4	(30)	2496		68		55		307	6045	100	15	900		250	(50)	335	410	790
Dark-eyed Junco		2	5		, .		16	, -					2	3			18		4			11		
Pine Grosbeak		33			10	4	21	10	7		35	112	7			172	6		8	35		41		
House Finch		2	2			9	55			6							14							4
Red Crossbill						2	5																	
White-winged Crossbill			5			1		2																
Common Redpoll		26	252		19	58	1125	195	94	40	1181	153	266	109	98	546	287	300	157	189	25	52	339	150
Hoary Redpoll		10	3			1							1							13				
Pine Siskin		7												2		10	7							
Evening Grosbeak		43										63				149			2			9		
House Sparrow		4	227	300	40	396	50	304	28	126	190		260	281	377	57	362	26	91	2	50	8	237	660
TOTAL BIRDS COUNT DAY	66	256	11397	611	174	918	4221	9525	271	508	1730	544	709			1322	1570		404			564	1096	2005
TOTAL BIRDS ONLY IN CP	0	31	2	0	0	0	40	0	2	4	0	1	0		0	11	0	2	0		68	4	0	5
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	9	21	35	21	13	21	38	39	13	14	18	14	17			14	35	8	17	13	l .	14	13	20
TOTAL SPECIES ONLY IN CP	0	2	2	0	0	0	6	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	1	3	3	0	5

Table 3.3. Species found on 6 or more counts; () = seen during count period (CP).

iabie 3.3. Specie	S TO	un	a o	n 6	or i	moi	re c	our	its;	():	= SE	en	auı	rıng) co	unı	: pe	rio	a (C	.P).				
SPECIES	LA RONGE 28 DEC 2015	LAST MTN LAKE NWA 29 DEC 2015	LEADER NORTH 29 DEC 2015	LOVE-TORCH RIVER 27 DEC 2015	LUSELAND 26 DEC 2015	MEADOW LAKE 26 DEC 2015	MOOSE JAW 16 DEC 2015	MOOSE MTN. P.P. 4 JAN 2016	MORSE 23 DEC 2015	NIPAWIN 23 DEC 2015	NISBET FOREST NW 26 DEC 2015	NISBET FOREST W 1 JAN 2016	ODESSA 28 DEC 2015	OUTLOOK 1 JAN 2016	PIERCE LAKE 30 DEC 2015	PIKE LAKE 2 JAN 2016	PONTEIX 28 DEC 2015	PRINCE ALBERT 20 DEC 2015	QU'APPELLE 30 DEC 2015	QU'APPELLE DAM 20 DEC 2015	RAYMORE 25 DEC 2015	REGINA 27 DEC 2015	ROKEBY 20 DEC 2015	ROSCOMMON S.D. 28 DEC 2015
Canada Goose	2		2				500							40	85				150	815		2023		
Mallard	_		_				200								0.5				.50	633		261		
Redhead																						1		
Lesser Scaup																						(1)		
Common Goldeneye															12	2				23		1		
Common Merganser															13					10		1		
Gray Partridge				6	21		(3)		105								9			20	6	101	32	21
Ring-necked Pheasant			4						1															
Ruffed Grouse				4						(2)	(1)		4			1		6	3				1	9
Sharp-tailed Grouse		4	5	4					24				15			80	44		17	37		11		
Bald Eagle			2	1	1				1	2			5		2	3		1		7		1	3	
Northern Goshawk				1											1			1		1	1			
Rough-legged Hawk																	1		1			36		
Golden Eagle																				1				
Rock Pigeon		15		48	20	1	130	16	108	60		50	6	55		116	6	201	90	25	106	1480	148	3
Eurasian Collared-Dove		3			13				26					26			3			3		2		
Mourning Dove																	1					4		
Great Horned Owl				(1)	7				20				2			3	1		1	1	(1)	3		(1)
Snowy Owl		1	1		1				8				2			2	3			4		10	1	(1)
Downy Woodpecker	1	2	1	11	2	1	2	2	(2)	5	2	1	3	1		46		7	14	2	1	16	14	9
Hairy Woodpecker	(1)			9		1	2	1		2	2	2	4		2	27		7	9	3		1	19	13
Northern Flicker							1									1		1		1		(1)		
Pileated Woodpecker				2				1					2			2		1						(1)
Merlin							(1)		4										1			2	1	
Northern Shrike				(1)			(1)								1	2		(1)	(2)			(1)		
Gray Jay	4			5		3												5						
Blue Jay	(1)			38	1		1	6		13	(6)	6		1	7	32		9		9	1	3	5	11
Black-billed Magpie	1	29	4	84	190	2	33	20	65	27	(2)	17	40	30	12	201	61	97	75	39	39	63	86	41
American Crow																						6		
Common Raven	228	8	2	117	12	58	1	4	1	333	2	17	30	31	21	124		276	132	12	69	195	116	21
Horned Lark		5			20		38		501					_			250		(2)		5	131		
Black-capped Chickadee	18	2	3	113	5	11	11	31		35	12	17	20	7	22	515		94	89	23	8	130	82	59
Boreal Chickadee	1			8	_					_				_				(3)						
Red-breasted Nuthatch				5	2	2	4	_	1	5	_			3		4		1	_	1		30	3	
White-breasted Nuthatch				10			1	3	1	4	3	1			1	28		3	3	1	1	14	1	
Brown Creeper Golden-crowned Kinglet									(1)											2		(1)		
American Robin									(1)							12		3	1	3		1		(1)
European Starling		31	3	41	7		(100)	22	73	10				50		3	25	3	18	44		42		13
Bohemian Waxwing		31)	41	(21)		(4)	22	(17)	35				30		1011	23	5475	10	445		42	6	(36)
Snow Bunting		570		164	44	50	(4)		349	33			25	30	30	283	1240	100		35	15	1564	95	1675
Dark-eyed Junco		370		104	77	50	5		343				4		50	1	1240	100		33	2	60		1075
Pine Grosbeak	27			222		8	10			99	(10)	19			6	287		164	2	46	39	2	16	156
House Finch					7		90		6	2	, ,			2		5	4		1			118		
Red Crossbill					2				(6)											6	4	3		
White-winged Crossbill									(.,						5	6		6				2		
Common Redpoll	13	66		956	276	30		62	647	128	(12)	95		21	275	720	3	234	800	323	1019	996	294	196
Hoary Redpoll				5		13						3			2	5		11					106	1
Pine Siskin																1							18	(4)
Evening Grosbeak	14			253						29	(6)	32			5			13						
House Sparrow		419	11	163	23	8	40	63	1385	60		4		70		372	740	332	162	233	104	2258	366	32
TOTAL BIRDS COUNT DAY	309	1155	38	2280	655	188	1070	231	3334	850	21	264	218	367	503	3899	2391	7060	1582	2817	1421	9589	1413	2260
TOTAL BIRDS ONLY IN CP	2	0	0	2	21	0	109	0	29	2	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	1	7	0	45
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	10	13	11	25	20	13	18	12	22	18	5	13	17	14	19	33	15	25	22	35	17	45	21	15
TOTAL SPECIES ONLY IN CP	2	0	0	2	1	0	5	0	7	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	7	0	7

Table 3.4. Species found on 6 or more counts; () = seen during count period (CP).

·	AU : 2015	ROUND LAKE (P.A.) 5 JAN 2016	ROUND LAKE (Q.V.) 14 DEC 2015	SALTCOATS 26 DEC 2015	SASK. LANDING. P.P. 4 JAN 2016	SASK. RIVER FORKS 3 JAN 2016	SASKATOON 26 DEC 2015	SAWYER LAKE 26 DEC 2015	SHAMROCK 28 DEC 2015	DEN 2016	SPINNEY HILL 21 DEC 2015	E HOME 2 2015	SQUAW RAPIDS 31 DEC 2015	SWIFT CURRENT 19 DEC 2015	THICKWOOD 8 DEC 2015	2016	WEYBURN 19 DEC 2015	WHITE BEAR 31 DEC 2015	HITEWOOD 3 DEC 2015	4RD 2016	YORKTON 29 DEC 2015	TOTALS COUNT DAY	TOTALS ONLY IN COUNT PERIOD	#COUNTS COUNT DAY	# COUNTS ONLY IN COUNT PERIOD
SPECIES	ROULE 28 DEC	OUNI	OUNI 4 DEC	ALTC(ASK. I	ASK. I	ASKA 6 DEC	AWYI 6 DEC	HAMI 8 DEC	SNOWDEN 4 JAN 2016	PINNE 11 DEC	SPRUCE 17 DEC 2	QUAV	WIFT 9 DEC	'HICK' S DEC	TOGO 5 JAN 2016	VEYBI 9 DEC	WHITE 11 DEC	WHITE 8 DEC	WINGARD 4 JAN 2016	ORKT 9 DEC	OTAL	OTAL	COUN	
Canada Goose	Ε(7		2320	ωN	N 4	ωm	175	W(A	OU (V	N 4	ω(z	ω-	ωm	(3)	$-\infty$			>0	<i>></i> (7	74	~~	43707	4	21	2
Mallard			56		1		10							(20)								15468	20	15	1
Redhead			30		•		(1)							(20)								12	1	5	1
Lesser Scaup			2				(1)															28	1	6	1
Common Goldeneye			1				247						245	(8)								1156	8	14	1
Common Merganser							,						1	(1)								149	1	7	1
Gray Partridge					23		28		53					43			71	40				1025	5	30	3
Ring-necked Pheasant									24					10			7					240	0	10	0
Ruffed Grouse				5				(7)				1			4	3			3			97	18	27	6
Sharp-tailed Grouse			5		39		7	(- /	15				2	16		3	29	89	6			1121	1	44	1
Bald Eagle			2				2	(2)					2	(1)	1	1			1		1	153	9	36	7
Northern Goshawk								, ,						, ,					1			9	1	9	1
Rough-legged Hawk			1				(1)															52	4	9	3
Golden Eagle					1		, ,				1						1	1				23	0	20	0
Rock Pigeon	43		34		10		2486		30		57			288	15		135	86	48		163	8535	0	68	0
Eurasian Collared-Dove				14			21		4					64			33		23		2	472	4	30	1
Mourning Dove							1							1								15	1	10	1
Great Horned Owl					8		3		5				1	1	1		2	11	1		1	132	5	44	5
Snowy Owl	2				2		2		4					2			2	8				99	3	30	3
Downy Woodpecker			5	7	1	2	48	(1)	4	9	2	2	1	4	3	16	2		20		10	456	4	74	3
Hairy Woodpecker			3	9		2	17	1		6	3	2	1	2	2	25	1		14	2	9	341	3	67	3
Northern Flicker					1		8							8								33	3	14	3
Pileated Woodpecker							1			(1)			1			(1)						14	6	10	6
Merlin							3		1					6								20	2	9	2
Northern Shrike			1				2				1		1						3			26	8	18	7
Gray Jay								(7)		7			8			2						59	8	14	2
Blue Jay		4	9	6		2	47	(2)		49	13	4	5		5	80			24	9	7	676	10	58	4
Black-billed Magpie	4		6	4	62	22	289	8	44	53	52	1	15	150	37	38	24	109	35		48	4337	3	88	2
American Crow							13							1								25	2	5	1
Common Raven	(1)		9	5	(6)	9	341	1	3	19	16		33	9	25	80	4		114		198	4448	7	82	2
Horned Lark					75		2		226		12			52			3	39	1			2383	2	31	1
Black-capped Chickadee		6	19	36	29	26	728	2		58	25	4	10	22	6	135			147	10	138	4250	0	80	0
Boreal Chickadee										6			10			4						38	4	8	2
Red-breasted Nuthatch			1	1			100			11			5	60			1		1		20	341	0	34	0
White-breasted Nuthatch		2	4	5	1		10	(1)		5				2	2	19	3		12	2	21	291	6	55	3
Brown Creeper							2							1								8	1	7	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet							2						2	1								21	1	9	1
American Robin					1		37												1		1	97	5	20	5
European Starling	25		11	10	19		148		7					96			30	21	56			2016	102	49	2
Bohemian Waxwing			212		4		1021							(62)					20			9372	192	25	8
Snow Bunting	400				70		22	17	4012	28	120			161	150		525		125			24709	1110	53	4
Dark-eyed Junco							7							11					10		18	216	1	26	1
Pine Grosbeak		10	11	16	4	24	66	23		121	40	15	27	2	50	250			21	6	15	2753	14	63	2
House Finch					15		525							119					6		25	1221	2	28	1
Red Crossbill							137							3	2							227	10	12	2
White-winged Crossbill							115				6											228	0	14	0
Common Redpoll		20	36	91	260	70	494	16	186	204	30	35	211	53	70	207	100	115	710	15	37	21870	12	86	1
Hoary Redpoll				40	1		10		5				4			52			11	5		364	4	28	2
Pine Siskin									1		3	_	40	16		45				20		101	4	14	1
Evening Grosbeak		6	400		420		1070	42	300	84	20	5	19	1740	22	45	220	F70	343	20	245	929	6	23	1
House Sparrow	96 570	_40	109	50 324	130	8 165		13	366	8	29	-co	10	1748 2953	32	70 1020	330 1374	570		50	245	22691	7 1653	80	1
TOTAL BIRDS COUNT DAY TOTAL BIRDS ONLY IN CP	570 1	48 0	2863	324	758 6	165 0	9262 2	81 23	4993 0	668 1	411 0	69 0	617 0	2953 95	408 0	1030	13/4	1089	1727	119	959 0	177799 1653	1003		
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	6	6		17	23	9	45	8	19	15	17		24	31	17	17	21	11	27	9	18	88			
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	8	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	1	0	0		4		

Table 4. Species found in fewer than 6 counts.

Greater White-fronted Goose	Coronach (4)
Snow Goose	Moose Jaw (1), Regina (4)
Ross's Goose	Coronach (1)
Cackling Goose	Coronach (6), Estevan (105), Qu'Appelle Dam (1)
Tundra Swan	Ft. Qu'Appelle (1), Qu'Appelle Dam (5), Round Lake (1)
Gadwall	Gardiner Dam (2), Indian Head (2), Round Lake (1)
American Wigeon	Coronach (1), Ft. Qu'Appelle (2), Gardiner Dam (2)
Northern Shoveler	Indian Head (1)
Northern Pintail	Gardiner Dam (1)
Green-winged Teal	Estevan (1)
Canvasback	Fort Qu'Appelle (3), Gardiner Dam (1),
Greater Scaup	Fort Qu'Appelle (16), Gardiner Dam (5)
King Eider	Fort Qu'Appelle (1)
Harlequin Duck	Saskatoon (1)
Bufflehead	Estevan (1), Ft. Qu'Appelle (1), Gardiner Dam (1), Indian Head (4)
Barrow's Goldeneye	Craven (1)
Hooded Merganser	Estevan (1), Indian Head (1), Squaw Rapids (2)
Ruddy Duck	Estevan (1*), Ft. Qu'Appelle (2)
•	
Spruce Grouse Willow Ptarmigan	Creighton (3)
•	Creighton (21)
Turkey Vulture	Ebenezer B (5) Regins (1) Shamrock (2)
Northern Harrier	Regina (1), Shamrock (3)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Pike Lake (1), Regina (1), Roscommon S.D (1*), Whitewood (1*)
Cooper's Hawk	Denholm (1*), Estevan (1*), Regina (1)
Red-tailed Hawk	Odessa (2)
American Coot	Coronach (8), Estevan (37), Ft. Qu'Appelle (11), Indian Head (1), Round Lake Q.V. (3)
Killdeer	Gardiner Dam (2), Indian Head (2), Qu'Appelle Dam (2)
Herring Gull	Gardiner Dam (7)
Glaucous Gull	Gardiner Dam (2),
Barred Owl	Good Spirit Lake (1*), Squaw Rapids (1)
Great Gray Owl	Archerwiil (1*), Endeavour (1*), Pierce Lake (1), Sawyer Lake (1*)
Long-eared Owl	Morse (1*)
Short-eared Owl	Ft. Qu'Appelle (1*), Luseland (1), Morse (6), Qu'Appelle Dam (1), Saltcoats (1)
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Denholm (1), Regina (1*)
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Regina (1*)
Black-backed Woodpecker	Creighton (1), Love-Torch River (10), Nipawin (1), Sawyer Lake (2*)
American Kestrel	Regina (1)
Gyrfalcon	Clark's Crossing (1), Harris (1), Pike Lake (1), Regina (1)
Prairie Falcon	Coronach (1), Gardiner Dam (1), Saskatchewan Landing P.P. (1)
Pacific wren	Cypress Hill P.P. (1*)
Townsend's Solitaire	Clark's Crossing (1), Craven (2), Saskatoon (2), Spinney Hill (1)
Varied Thrush	Borden-Radisson (2), Odessa (4), Raymore (1)
Gray Catbird	Morse (1*)
Cedar Waxwing	Balgonie (10), Ft. Qu'Appelle (6*), Pike Lake (2), Saltcoats (24), Saskatoon (101)
Lapland Longspur	Coronach (1), Hazlet (12), Kutawagan Lake (1), Weyburn (70)
Pine warbler	Saskatoon (1)
Spotted Towhee	Craven (1)
Eastern Towhee	Regina (1)
American Tree Sparrow	Avonlea (1), Ebenzer B (10), Odessa (50)
Vesper Sparrow	Morse (1*)
Savannah Sparrow	Kyle (1)
Song Sparrow	Saskatoon (1)
White-throated Sparrow	Chatsworth S.D (6), Eastend (1), Qu'Appelle (1), Regina (2)
Harris's Sparrow	Ft. Qu'Appelle (2), Qu'Appelle (10)
Golden-crowned Sparrow	Morse (1)
Scarlet Tanager	Regina (1*)
Red-winged Blackbird	Duval (8), Round Lake Q.V. (1)
Rusty Blackbird	Biggar (2)
Brewer's Blackbird	Saskatoon (1)
Cray grouped Bosy Finch	Avonlea (1), Ft. Qu'Appelle (2), Regina (2), Weyburn (1)
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	Hudson Bay (1*)
Purple Finch Cassin's Finch	Clark's Crossing (7), Ft. Qu'Appelle (8), Kenosee Lake (1), Thickwood Hills-Spiritwood (3) Endeavour (1)
	English and MET 1.11

Table 5. Birds not identified to species.

CATEGORY	LOCALITY AND NUMBER (*=COUNT PERIOD)
Hawk sp.	Morse (1)
Gull sp.	Swift Current (1)
Woodpecker sp.	Saskatoon (2)
Falcon sp.	Kindersley North (1)

Table 6. New (in bold and italics) and tying high counts for individual species 2015.

			-	
LOCATION	2015 COUNT	SPECIES	PREVIOUS HIGH	LOCATION, YEAR
Coronach	4	Greater White-fronted Goose	3	Coronach 2001
Regina	4	Snow Goose	4	Weyburn 1999
Coronach	1	Ross's Goose	1	Regina 1962, 1974
Estevan	105	Cackling Goose	50	Gardiner Dam 2011
Ft Qu'Appelle	16	Greater Scaup	9	Gardiner Dam 2013
Ft Qu'Appelle	1	King eider	NEW	
Saskatoon	1	Harlequin Duck	1	Gardiner Dam 1990, Fort Qu'Appelle 1991
Craven	1	Barrow's Goldeneye	1	Squaw Rapids 1997, 2012; Saskatoon 2007, Ft Qu'Appelle 2013
Ebenezer B	5	Turkey Vulture	2	Grayson 1991
Shamrock	3	Northern Harrier	2	Luseland 1994, Govenlock 2007
Gardiner Dam, Indian Head, Qu'Appelle Dam	2	Killdeer	2	Saskatchewan Landing P.P. 1998
Regina	36	Rough-legged Hawk	14	Govenlock 2003
Regina	1	Red-bellied Woodpecker (count period)	1	Regina 2001, Yorkton 2007, Crooked River 2010, Grenfell 2013
Love-Torch River	10	Black-backed Woodpecker	6	Squaw Rapids 1985, Snowden 1995
Cypress Hills P.P.	1	Pacific Wren (count period)	1	Fort Walsh 1999
Odessa	4	Varied Thrush	2	Saskatoon 2000, Odessa 2012, Swift Current 2012 (count period)
Morse	1	Gray Catbird (count period)	1	Moose Jaw 2001, Yorkton 2002
Saskatoon	1	Pine Warbler	NEW	
Craven	1	Spotted Towhee	1	North to Turtle Lake and Saskatoon
Regina	1	Eastern Towhee	1	Regina 2005, Candle Lake 2008, Rouleau 2010, Floral 2012
Morse	1	Golden-crowned Sparrow	1	Broadview 2014
Regina	1	Scarlet Tanager	NEW	
Endeavour	1	Cassin's Finch	1	Fort Walsh, 1983; Saskatoon 2013, 2014 (count period)
Rokeby	106	Hoary Redpoll	62	Cumberland House 1969

Table 7. Population changes

in numbers of selected species in 2015* compared to 2014 and the average for five years (2010-2014), based on the number of birds per party hour. A minus sign indicates a decrease from previous years.

accicase from previou	is years.	
SPECIES	% CHANGE FROM 2014	% CHANGE FROM 2010-14
Canada Goose	219	344
Mallard	92	92
Common Goldeneye	30	79
Gray Partridge	12	-13
Ring-necked Pheasant	-15	-19
Ruffed Grouse	-37	-9
Sharp-tailed Grouse	-25	-14
Bald Eagle	54	70
Northern Goshawk	-64	-33
Golden Eagle	-25	7
Rock Pigeon	-20	3
Eurasian Collared-Dove	12	26
Great Horned Owl	-15	20
Snowy Owl	-46	-38
Downy Woodpecker	-34	-12
Hairy Woodpecker	-37	-19
Northern Flicker	-32	-20
Pileated Woodpecker	-52	-27
Merlin	-15	-6
Northern Shrike	-26	2
Gray Jay	-25	-28
Blue Jay	-30	-19
Black-billed Magpie	-29	-8
American Crow	14	7
Common Raven	-40	-17
Horned Lark	524	308
Black-capped Chickadee	-33	-13
Boreal Chickadee	-33	-57
Red-breasted Nuthatch	-17	-23
White-breasted Nuthatch	-37	-6
Brown Creeper	-68	-51
American Robin	84	58
European Starling	-1	38
Bohemian Waxwing	-3	24
Snow Bunting	99	58
Dark-eyed Junco	-9	25
Pine Grosbeak	85	55
House Finch	-17	23
White-winged Crossbill	358	-17
Common Redpoll	334	170
Hoary Redpoll	232	259
Pine Siskin	8	5
American Goldfinch	-75	-38
Evening Grosbeak	-31	-29
House Sparrow	-19	9

^{*}As tremendous changes can occur in small sample sizes only those species recorded on an annual average of six or more counts are included. 🖊

WESTERN RED DAMSELFLIES FOUND AT TWO NEW LOCATIONS IN 2015

Lorne Duczek

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On July 5, 2015, western red damsel (Amphiagrion abbreviatum) damselflies were found in the Crooked Lake Fen, a Nature Saskatchewan sanctuary, at the calcareous pools in the northwest sector (N50.65068 W102.84033). On July 8, 2015, they were also found at a small spring near the east entrance (N49.20542 W109.02536) of Old Man on His Back Conservation Area west of Claydon. Several mating pairs and individuals were seen at both locations.

This species has only been found at widely dispersed locations in

Saskatchewan. It was recorded near Roche Percee in the southeast in 1980 and at two locations south of Maple Creek prior to 2005. It was discovered at a fen at Petturson's Ravine in Saskatoon in 2013¹.

The western red damsel is a small damselfly, 24-28 mm long, and its bright red abdomen distinguishes it from other small damselflies in Saskatchewan, which are mainly blue. It has very specific habitat requirements that include small springs and fens with open water and low vegetation. Adults may be present at these habitats from late June to early August. The western red damsel is a rare species as sightings are sparse across the prairies. Its presence at the Crooked

Lake Fen and at Old Man on His Back might serve to highlight the conservation value of these natural landscapes.

1. Duczek L, Taylor P, Salisbury C, Salisbury L (2014) Western Red Damsel at Petturson's Ravine in Saskatoon Saskatchewan in 2013. *Blue Jay* 72: 81-85.



Photo credit: Lorne Duczek



Photo credit: Lorne Duczek



Cliff swallows gathering mud. Photo credit: Dan Loran

WING-FLAPPING BY MUD-GATHERING CLIFF SWALLOWS: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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Dan Loran's photographs of cliff swallows (Petrochelidon pyrrhonota) in the June 2015 issue of Blue Jay¹ clearly show the birds fluttering their wings above their backs as they gather mud for their nests, in the tight flocks that are typical of this behaviour.^{2,3} Each bird raises its tail slightly above the horizontal and flutters its wings above the back while pecking mud into a pellet that will be added to the gourd-shaped nest that usually abuts adjacent nests, in dense colonies.^{2,4}

Why do cliff swallows flap their wings while gathering mud? An early suggestion was that wing-fluttering prevents cliff swallows from sinking and sticking in the mud and soiling their feathers. This explanation does not extend to the solitarily nesting barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), however, which also builds mud nests but does not similarly flap the wings when gathering the mud.

More recently, Robert Butler

proposed that wing flapping by mud-: gathering cliff swallows facilitates avoidance of copulations forced on females while they are gathering mud.4 This hypothesis was based on data collected for male bank swallows (Riparia riparia), another species of swallow that nests in dense colonies, but in burrows constructed in sand banks. Male bank swallows escorted their mates when away from the nests to guard against "promiscuous copulations". This behaviour was interpreted as "mate guarding"⁶, and that extrapair copulations were attempted on the ground.⁷ In the cliff swallow, one member of a mated pair quards the nest while the other gathers mud³, which precludes guarding the mudgathering female.4

Butler observing that wingfluttering by mud-gathering cliff swallows became more frequent as flock size increased and during the onset of egg laying when females were most fertile. He tested the hypothesis by recording the frequency of "copulation attempts" by males on taxidermic models of cliff swallows placed at mudgathering sites, some with wings extended above the back, the others with wings folded against the body.⁴ He predicted that males would attempt to land on the backs of models with folded wings more frequently than on swallows with extended wings. Although the results were not significant, fewer attacks were recorded on models of mudgathering females whose wings were extended versus those with folded wings.⁴

- 1. Loran, D (2015) Cliff Swallows are gathering mud. *Blue Jay* 73:87-88.
- 2. Emlen JT Jr (1952) Social behavior in nesting Cliff Swallows. *Condor* 54:177-199.
- Emlen JT Jr (1954) Territory, nest building, and pair formation in the Cliff Swallow. Auk 71:16-35.
- 4. Butler RW (1982) Wing fluttering by mudgathering Cliff Swallows: avoidance of "rape" attempts? *Auk* 99:758-761.
- 5. Brown FA (1910) Cliff Swallows. *Bird-Lore* 12:137-138.
- 6. Beecher MD, Beecher IM (1979) Sociobiology of Bank Swallows: reproductive strategy of the male. *Science* 205:1282-1284.
- 7. Hoogland JL, Sherman PW (1976) Advantages and disadvantages of Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*) coloniality. *Ecological Mongraphs* 46:33-58.

Introducing Alan R. Smith, Saskatchewan Coordinator of the 2016 Piping Plover Breeding Census



A native of Saskatchewan, Alan (Al) Smith is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan (Bachelor of Science Advanced). Most of his 45-year career has been spent with the Canadian Wildlife Service where he has studied waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds, raptors and landbirds from the High Arctic to the Tropics. Although now "retired", he has continued to be involved in managing the Last Mountain Bird Observatory (LMBO); the only Saskatchewan Member of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network. He also coordinates the Christmas Bird and Mammal Count. Breeding Bird Survey, and Nocturnal Owl Survey for Saskatchewan. Al is the author of two books: the "Atlas of Saskatchewan Birds" and "Saskatchewan Birds", and the co-author of "Compact Guide to Saskatchewan Birds". Most recently, he has teamed up with Dr. Stuart Houston and J. Frank Roy to edit the two-volume "Birds of Saskatchewan", due for publication late in 2016. Al's favourite birds are the grassland birds of the Northern Great Plains with special interest in the ferruginous hawk.



Piping plover. Photo credit: Nick Saunders.

2016 INTERNATIONAL PIPING PLOVER BREEDING CENSUS

Call for Volunteers in Saskatchewan

Exact dates: TBD by the U.S. Geological Survey (expected to be the first two weeks of June 2016)

The International Piping Plover Census is the longest running shorebird census in North America to cover nearly the entire breeding range of a single species. This coming summer will mark the sixth such census, and Nature Saskatchewan will once again be coordinating the Saskatchewan portion. The 2016 census will be especially important as we hope to see a recovery of Piping Plover numbers from the 2011 census, which had the fewest birds observed since 1991.

The piping plover is a small migratory shorebird that uses beaches of saline and freshwater lakes in southern Saskatchewan for nesting. It is readily distinguished from other plover species by single black bands on its breast and forehead, and by its back and nape which are the colour of dry sand.

Nature Saskatchewan is looking for volunteers to census piping plovers at one or more basins in Saskatchewan. Surveyors will receive all of the necessary information to conduct the census, and piping plover hats will also be provided. Volunteers' expenses will also be offset by honoraria, pending funding.

This is a great opportunity to contribute to the ongoing conservation of piping plovers while exploring Saskatchewan's great landscape. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated, and is needed in 2016 more than ever. Please consider being a part of this important project!

If you are interested in being a volunteer, here are a couple of points for your consideration:

1. Familiarize yourself with the species. It is very important that you are able to recognize piping plovers in the field by both sight and sound. Aside from numerous field guides, there are many online resources; one of the best being the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's website: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Piping_Plover/id

For the tech savvy, there are also a number of apps available that make identification in the field a snap: http://blog.nature.org/science/2013/05/27/boucher-bird-blog-apps-smart-birder/

2. Consider where you might want to survey for Piping Plovers. Although the Saskatchewan Coordinator will make the final decision, surveyors will be accommodated as much as possible, especially if they have a special interest in, or knowledge of an area. For more information about the 2016 census, or if you would like to participate, please contact Alan Smith, the Saskatchewan Coordinator at (306) 868-4554 or by email at pipingplover@ naturesask.ca.

THE STEWARDS OF SASKATCHEWAN PROGRAMS WELCOME SUMMER STAFF FOR 2016

Each summer, the Stewards of Saskatchewan staff is busy connecting with land stewards, surveying for species at risk, and promoting awareness of our disappearing prairie and parkland landscapes and their biological diversity. This work is supported by hard working summer staff and, in 2016, we are very pleased to welcome Kris Mutafov and Shayna Hamilton.





Kris Mutafov

Hi! My name is Kris Mutafov, and I was born and raised in Regina with a love for nature and conservation. I am currently a 3rd year student at UBCO in Kelowna, BC, studying Ecology and Earth & Environmental Sciences. In the past I have worked in the Parks system in Ontario, and gained valuable insight working with naturalists and conservationists, most of whom were volunteers. On the side, I love to explore, backpack, do outdoor sports, and photograph our world. Through my life, I hope to contribute to protection in a way that will positively impact future generations of life on this planet. I strongly believe that we should not treat the natural world as but a factor in our lives: but instead treat it as our very livelihood itself. So much is at stake in our changing world, and I am very excited to be working with programs that Nature Saskatchewan manages, such as Species at Risk and Stewards of Saskatchewan. Here's to a great summer!

Shayna Hamilton

Hello everyone! I am currently an undergraduate student at the University of Regina, working towards my degree in Ecology and Environmental Biology, and this summer I will be a Stewardship Assistant! My love for nature started at a very young age. I grew up in the small town of Torquay, hunting and fishing with my family. My mother always tells me that when I was five I told her that I wanted to work with animals, and now my dreams are becoming a reality! In my spare time I enjoy camping, shooting my bow and shore fishing. I previously worked with the Water Security Agency on their piping plover program, so plovers will always hold a special place in my heart. I look forward to my summer with Nature Saskatchewan and not only getting to work with amazing people, but also the beautiful flora and fauna that Saskatchewan has to offer!

OWLS OF THE PRAIRIES

Kaytlyn Burrows, Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, Nature Saskatchewan

With spring on our doorsteps, we are all excited to feel the warmth of the sun and the return of our beautiful green landscapes and wildlife! The prairies are home to a variety of owl species including the great horned owl, the short-eared owl, and the burrowing owl. It is not uncommon for one of these species



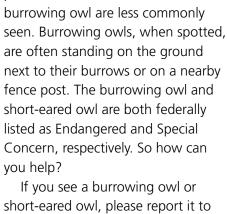
Photo credit: Shelly Fisher

Burrowing owl

- Small owl, approximately 9 inches tall
- Long featherless legs
- Mottled brown and white feathers
- Bushy white 'eyebrows' and 'chin' with large yellow eyes
- Nests underground in abandoned burrows
- Can be seen from May to September

of owls to be misidentified. The following information and photos can help you distinguish them as you head out into the great outdoors this spring.

The short-eared owl nests on the ground, whereas the great horned owl nests in trees or caves, and the burrowing owl nests underground. The great horned owl is the largest of the three species at approximately 22 inches tall, while the burrowing owl is the smallest at 9 inches tall, and the short-eared owl is approximately 15 inches tall. The great horned owl is common to see year round, often perched on a tree branch or power



pole, while the short-eared owl and

Nature Saskatchewan through the toll free (SK and AB only) HOOT line at 1-800-667-4668, or 306-780-9833, or by email at obo@naturesask.ca. 🗘



Photo credit: Randy McCulloch

Short-eared owl

- Medium sized owl. approximately 15 inches tall
- Boldly streaked breast
- Light facial disks with dark black patches around the eyes

Photo credit: Randy McCulloch

- Small 'ear' tufts that are not alwavs visible
- Black 'wrist' marks on the underside of the wings
- Nests on the ground
- Can be seen year-round

Great horned owl

- Large owl, approximately 22 inches tall
- Mottled gray-brown with a reddish brown face and white throat
- Two prominent feathered tufts or 'horns' on its head
- Most conspicuous at dusk
- Nests in trees or caves
- Can be seen year-round

ANOMALOUS BILL ON RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

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On the evening of July 16, 2014, we were birding in the area around the north end of Blackstrap Lake, southeast of Saskatoon. At about 20:00 h, we stopped at the intersection of Highway 663 and Township Road 334 (a location known to local birders as the 'four corners sloughs') for a final scan for waterfowl. On a stop sign across the road, a male red-winged blackbird (Agelaius phoeniceus) made his presence known by singing and calling repeatedly. From our location it appeared that he was holding a black feather in his bill. We crossed the road for a closer look and discovered that the feather was actually a wafer-thin extension of his maxilla (aka upper mandible), that was more than twice as long and wide as his bill.

The bills of birds consist of a bone structure covered by a keratin layer. The keratin layer grows continuously during the life of the bird, but normal wear maintains the shape and size. Recently, bill deformities were reported in 30 wild bird species along the northwestern coast of North America.^{1,2} The deformities resulted from accelerated growth of the keratin on the maxilla, the mandible, or both. The abnormal growth patterns reported included simple elongation as well as significantly curved and crossed bills. Affected birds were seen to have difficulty feeding, and were unable to preen themselves to maintain plumage quality and remove external parasites. One of the studies noted



Photo credit: Craig Salisbury

that a few birds with deformed bills exhibited a normal bill shape when later recaptured, suggesting that such deformities are not always permanent.²

Neither study reported the type of bill anomaly we saw with the redwinged blackbird. Other than the growth from the tip of the maxilla, the rest of the bill appeared to be normal. Although this blackbird appeared healthy, it seems likely that the growth would interfere with feeding, preening and other tasks. It may be that the extension periodically breaks off, allowing the bird to function in a normal manner.

While much of the current research into this phenomenon is centred in Alaska, avian bill deformities have been reported worldwide. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada have asked Project FeederWatch participants in the United States and Canada to report affected birds,3 and in the United Kingdom the British Trust for Ornithology has asked Garden BirdWatch participants to do the same as part of their Big Garden Beak Watch project.4 Data from citizen scientists should help identify those species most affected and possibly reveal a geographical aspect.

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- 2. Handel CM, Pajot LM, Matsuoka SM, Van Hemert C, Terenzi J, Talbot SL, Mulcahy DM. Metever CU. Trust KA (2010) Epizootic of beak deformities among wild birds in Alaska: an emerging disease in North America? The Auk 4:882-898.
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JUNE 17, 18 & 19 WOLSELEY, SASKATCHEWAN

Friday, June 17

Dinner on your own

6:00pm — Registration and refreshments at Wolseley Town Hall.

7:00pm — Welcome to Wolseley

7:15pm — Speakers:

KELSEY MARCHAND – Recent Margaret Skeel Graduate Student Scholarship award winner in 2015 will be delivering a presentation on her research and work, focused on turtles living in Wascana Marsh.

MARLA ANDERSON – A Nature Saskatchewan summer assistant will present on Important Bird Areas around Saskatchewan with a special focus on her photography.

8:30pm — Explanation of Tours

RICHARD SOLBERG – (President, Wolseley Nature Conservation Society) Explanation of logistics and tours to take place Saturday.

2016 FALL MEET IN SASKATOON

The 2016 Fall Meet will be held in Saskatoon from September 30 to October 2. Full details will be on the Nature Saskatchewan website as they become available, and watch for further information in the summer and fall issues of Blue Jay.

Saturday, June 18

Breakfast on your own

TOURS

Qu'Appelle Ecological Reserve Tour (north of Wolseley)

Reservoir/Marsh Tour

(south of Wolseley)

Groups will be divided, carpooling to destinations

8:30am — Departure for first leg of Tour

11:30am — Departure for lunch at Wolseley Nature **Conservation Society** Trails in town

1:30pm — Departure for second leg of Tour

4:30pm — Return to Wolseley

5:30pm — Cocktails at

Wolseley Town Hall

6:15pm — Dinner

7:15pm — Presentations/Speakers:

Feral boar distribution in the Prairie Provinces

RUTH KOST – (M.Sc. Candidate, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, University of Saskatchewan)

Wolf Ecology in **Boreal Saskatchewan**

TOM PERRY – (M.Sc. Candidate, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, University of Saskatchewan)

Sunday, June 19

Breakfast on your own

9:00am — Annual General Meeting at Wolseley Town Hall

Depart for home

Take time either before or after the AGM to explore the new Wolseley Nature Trails in town.

Accommodation Suggestions

HOTELS/MOTELS:

The Wolseley Motel 306-698-2499 (http://wolseleymotel.ca/)

The Leland Hotel

(306) 698-2000

Grenfell Homestead Motel (306) 697-2846

Indian Head - Sunshine Motel (306) 695-3366 (www.sunshinemotel.ca)

BED & BREAKFAST:

Banbury House & Inn (306) 698-2333 (www.banburyhouse.com)

CAMPING:

Sleepy Hollow Campground Randy at (306) 698-2984.

REGISTRATION FORM

Nature Saskatchewan & Wolseley Nature Conservation Society Annual Spring Meet in Wolseley, SK June 17-19, 2016

Name:		
Address:		
Postal Code:		
Telephone:		
Email:		
Spring Meet Fees (see program description		
Early Registration Fee (prior to June 10):	\$75.00	\$
Late Registration Fee (after June 10):	\$85.00	\$
*Additional Banquet Tickets :	\$25.00	\$
ticket(s) at \$25.00/ticket		
(# tickets)		
TOTAL AMOUNT		\$
NOTE		
NOTE:		
Do you have any dietary needs or allergies (ple		YES or NO

Mail, e-mail or call our office to register for the 2016 Spring Meet:

(Make cheque payable to Nature Saskatchewan).

Naturo SASKATCHEWAN

Nature Saskatchewan 206 - 1860 Lorne Street, Regina, SK S4P 2L7 info@naturesask.ca 1-800-667-4668 OR 306-780-9273

IS NOCTURNAL BIRDING FOR YOU? Practising Mindfulness while Birding on Skis

Rob Wilson

Nature Saskatchewan Director

I am, these days, contemplating "mindfulness" — a term defined as "giving thought or heed to". It calls for one to be present or to live in the moment. Extolled as state of mind that is advantageous to one's health and to a general sense of well-being, I embrace the concept. I believe mindfulness to be a desirable state that, when achieved, functions to assist with good psychological health. I also believe that bird watching, bird-experiencing or

birding — specifically nocturnal birding — to be a helpful avenue to travel when attempting to place one's brain in a state of mindfulness.

My nocturnal birding occurs in tandem with my love of crosscountry skiing at night.

Since western culture is described as a culture that places a high value on visual perception, let us begin by considering what one might see while gliding at night along a forested trail. The bird most likely to be encountered would be a grouse (either a ruffed or a sharp-tailed)

— more about this below. You may

also encounter one of a number of species of owls. A friend tells a hairraising story of a great horned owl attempting to tear a muskrat hat off her father's head — more about owls in a moment. If the trails that you ski have a warm-up shelter complete with a bird feeder (many ski clubs provide free lunches for winter birds) you may, if you check quietly, be rewarded as I was the other night by a flying squirrel methodically transferring black oil sunflower seeds from our club's feeder to its cheek pouches. Since these night squirrels do a kind of flying, I think that it is legitimate to consider them to be a "sighting" (if you ask "what's flying around?", it qualifies).

I want to warn — while freely conceding that this can in no way be considered to be an avian sighting— that one could also spot a moose on a darkened and elongated downhill glide. However, there is a small danger that you might collide with it before actually seeing it as moose eyes and black hair are notoriously difficult to see in the dark. It is also difficult to stop those damned skis once they commit themselves to a downhill slope.

Let's consider a second sense

— hearing. Achieving a state of mindfulness requires concentration. One must be focused and alert to separate rustlings of "things that go bump in the night" from the rhythmic and gentle scrapings of one's ski wax against the snow. You may note calling owls — great horned, barred for certain, and possibly a great gray. In early fall and spring you may hear the echoing cries of migrating geese. You are certain to hear the yipping of coyotes and, if lucky, the howling

of timber wolves. Again, these are not technically birds; however, they may cause you to take flight so, to my mind, it is legitimate to mention these canines.

An activity to really get you into the moment while skiing is to practice bird calls.

You can try the great horned owl ("who ... who ... who who who") or the barred owl ("who ... who ... who cooks for you?"). An alternative attempt to mimic the barred owl may surreptitiously arise if you suddenly and unexpectedly encounter a fellow skier in the dark. You might consider blurting "Wh ... Wh Who are you?" I advise that you work diligently to remove panic and fear from your phraseology as any nearby owl may detect those nuances and fail to respond to you. I also advise you to omit blurting "Who the hell are you?" as your call will no longer onomatopoeically resemble the questioning of a barred owl.

Another spontaneous opportunity may arise if you become separated from your ski companions in the dark. Remembering or struggling to control potential panic and fear inclinations, you might attempt to contact your friends (and that nearby pack of coyotes) by calling "Wh ... wh Where RUUUUUUUUY???" I realize that this is not really a bird call, but your mind is certain to be full as you try to reunite with your birder friends.

Permit me, as I conclude, kind reader, to attempt to more tightly fuse nocturnal birding with your efforts to achieve mindfulness. Try focusing for the moment upon how you feel — you may for example, if the temperature is below minus 24 degrees Celsius, feel cold (pay special attention to your thumbs, fingers, nose and toes). Take a moment to check your consciousness to determine if you are experiencing



Ruffed grouse. Photo credit: Nick Saunders

wonderment. If the coyotes or wolves are vocalizing at the moment, you might ask "I wonder if I will make it back to the truck?"

You may experience stimuli, which can have the effect of rushing your brain into mindfulness, that are actually explosive. An example would be unexpected and unforeseen slapping or scratching of your face as you fly past that over-reaching branch. This can really get your attention! Even more exciting is the bursting, from beneath the snow and between your skis, of a ruffed or sharp-tailed grouse accompanied by a surreal whirring of wings in the dark. You might find that you spontaneously utter a call — "Aiiiiiiiii!" Note that I have not been able to locate, to this point, any bird vocalizations that resemble this call, which leads me to conclude that it is likely to be a primordial utterance. A grouse-between-the-skis-in-thedark-while-skiing-downhill encounter could provide an unexpected and unplanned opportunity to practice wonderment (I wonder which tree it flew into as it blasted into the forest?). Such an incident may also provide insight — once your heart and blood pressure stats subside, you realize that you are "just as chicken" as the escaping fowl.

I invite you, intrigued reader, to share any nocturnal birding stories that you possess. I have not been able to adapt my skis to spring and summer conditions and, therefore, do not have stories from those seasons. I also harbour a chronic fear of bears that exerts a restraining influence on nocturnal wanderings at these times. With your kind assistance, together we may be able to encompass and expand the joys of nocturnal birding to all of the seasons.



Great horned owl. Photo credit: Nick Saunders

43RD ANNUAL SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTMAS MAMMAL COUNT - 2015



Mule deer. Photo Credit: Randy McCulloch

Alan R. Smith, Box 154, Avonlea, SK, SOH 0C0 alanrandi@sasktel.net

Eighty-five Christmas Mammal Counts were conducted this winter – up four from last year. The 2,458 mammals seen or heard were up 27 per cent over last year's 26-year low of 1,937. The slightly greater coverage notwithstanding, most of the increase was a result of an increase in the numbers of two ungulates: White-tailed deer and pronghorn. White-tailed deer



Moose. Photo Credit: Randy McCulloch

numbers rose from 598 last year to 758 this winter, while pronghorn rose from 66 to 223. Interestingly, mule deer numbers stayed much the same (486 vs 490).

Squirrels did well again this year. The 134 eastern fox squirrels on the Regina count smashed the previous record of 61 set in the Queen City only last winter. Its expansion also continues with the first CMC record from Yorkton. Greenwater set a new high for northern flying squirrels at five, the previous high was four at Togo in 2001, 2002, 2011, 2012 2013, and 2014.

Canids did well too. A pack of four wolves north of Kindersley on December 14 was well south of their usual range in the boreal forest, while a count of 35 coyotes on the Morse count set a new high for the species.

With 11 species seen or heard, Odessa edged out perennial winner and runner-up Indian Head with 10. No new species were added this winter, so the all-time provincial total remains at 51 species seen or heard (plus three species found dead and two 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 (December 14 to January 5) but not on count day. Numbers of individuals seen or heard are given in Table 1 and are tallied in the first line of totals at the bottom of the table. The number of species they represent is given in the second line.

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

Table 1.1. 43rd Saskatchewan Christmas Mammal Count - 2015.

				10		BORDEN -RADISSON, 16 DEC 2015		٥,٧		CHATSWORTH S.D., 4 JAN 2016	CHRISTOPHER LAKE, 23 DEC 2015	CHURCHBRIDGE B, 31 DEC 2015	CLARK'S CROSSING, 19 DEC 2015	- 10			AKE,	IVER,	CYPRESS HILLS P.P., 30 DEC 2015	10	-310		
	ARCHERWILL, 30 DEC 2015	AVONLEA, 28 DEC 2015	BALGONIE, 3 JAN 2016	BIGGAR, 27 DEC 2015	BIRCH HILLS, 2 JAN 2016	EN -RA	BRIERCREST, 2 JAN 2016	BROADVIEW, 24 DEC 2015	CATER, 1 JAN 2016	SWOR 2016	C 2015	CHBRI C 2015	K'S CR(CORONACH, 20 DEC 2015	CRAVEN, 19 DEC 2015	CREIGHTON, 2 JAN 2016	CROOKED LAKE, 21 DEC 2015	CROOKED RIVER, 29 DEC 2015	ESS HII C 2015	DENHOLM, 25 DEC 2015	DORINTOSH, 23 DEC 2015	DUVAL, 3 JAN 2016	EASTEND, 4 JAN 2016
SPECIES	RCF 0 DE	NON 8 DE	ALG	1GG	IRCH	ORD 6 DE	RIER	ROA 4 DE	ATE	HAT	HRIS 3 DE	HUF 1 DE	LAR 9 DE	ORC 0 DE	RAV 9 DE	JAN	ROC 1 DE	ROC 9 DE	YPR 0 DE	ENF 5 DE	3 DE	JAN	AST
Shrew species	3 8	47	മന	7 B	m <	- B	B 7	B 7	0-	04	70	Oπ	0-	7	0-	t t	7	7	Oε	7	7 D	<u> С</u> м	Ф 4
Nuttall's Cottontail																	t		t			t	2
Snowshoe Hare				t	t			t	t		t	t	t		t	t		t	·	1		t	
White-tailed Jack Rabbit	С		5	t			1	t			ı.		t	t	t			·		С		t	
Eastern Grey Squirrel			3					·							7								
Eastern Fox Squirrel		5	17					5							8							3	
American Red Squirrel	3	3	17		2	2		1	4	4	2	3			6	7	1		4		1	3	
	3		'					'	4	4		3			0	,	1		4	1	'		
Northern Flying-Squirrel Northern Pocket Gopher																							
American Beaver					L			L	L	L							L				L	L	
Deer Mouse								t .															
Muskrat				L	L			L	L								L			L		L	
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole																				1			
Meadow Vole											2												
Vole species				t				t								t		t			t	t	
House Mouse			_															_					
Mouse species			t		t								t		t			t			t	t	
American Porcupine			t																				С
Coyote	С	1	1	1	1		1	1			С	t	1	2	1	t				5	t	2	2
Gray Wolf																t						t	
Red Fox	С		1					t	t							С		t		С		t	
Raccoon	С													t									
American Marten	С																						
Fisher																t							
Ermine					t	1		t								t							
Long-tailed Weasel														t	1	t				С		t	
Weasel species	С											t											
American Mink	1				t			t	t						1								1
American Badger																							
Striped Skunk								t														S	
River Otter																t							
Mountain Lion																			t				
Canada Lynx																t							
Mule Deer			7	20					t						12					С			57
White-tailed Deer	5	9	5	t	t			t	t	10	t	t	9	38	13		3		9	4	123	4	33
Deer species													t									t	
Moose	1		t	t				t	2	8						t				2			1
Elk	t																						
Pronghorn																							
American Bison																							
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	10	15	40	21	3	3	2	7	6	22	4	3	10	40	49	7	4	0	13	14	124	9	96
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	4	3	8	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	2	2	8	1	2	0	2	6	2	3	6
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	1	0	3	5	6	0	0	10	5	0	2	4	4	3	3	11	1	4	2	0	3	9	0
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	3	0
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	1
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	11	3	11	8	10	2	2	15	9	4	5	5	5	5	11	13	5	4	4	11	5	13	7

30 BLUE JAY SPRING 2016 VOLUME 74.1 SPRING 2016 VOLUME 74.1 BLUE JAY 31

Table 1.2. 43rd Saskatchewan Christmas Mammal Count - 2015.

SPECIES	EBENEZER A, 30 DEC 2015	EBENEZER B, 31 DEC 2015	ENDEAVOUR, 21 DEC 2015	ESTEVAN, 1 JAN 2016	ESTUARY NORTH, 4 JAN 2016	FENTON, 5 JAN 2016	FLORAL, 15 DEC 2015	FORT QU'APPELLE, 18 DEC 2015	GARDINER DAM, 21 DEC 2015	GOOD SPIRIT LAKE, 31 DEC 2015	GRASSLANDS N.P., 17 DEC 2015	GREENWATER, 3 JAN 2016	GRENFELL, 29 DEC 2015	HARRIS, 14 DEC 2015	HAZLET, 26 DEC 2015	INDIAN HEAD, 28 DEC 2015	KENASTON, 14 DEC 2015	KENOSEE LAKE, 22 DEC 2015	KETCHEN, 26 DEC 2015	KINDERSLEY NORTH, 26 DEC	KINLOCH, 30 DEC 2015	KUTAWAGAN LAKE, 27 DEC 2015	KYLE, 17 DEC 2015
Shrew species																							
Nuttall's Cottontail					2				t						1								t
Snowshoe Hare	t						t	1	4	1		t	t	2	'	1		t	t		2		
White-tailed Jack Rabbit				t			t		t	t	1		t	t	t	'	1			t		t	t
Eastern Grey Squirrel											•					4	•			,			
Eastern Fox Squirrel	t			3				С					3			10							
American Red Squirrel	2		1	,				9	t	3		4	1			10		4	2		t		
Northern Flying-Squirrel			'					9	·			5						4					
Northern Pocket Gopher										С		3						d					
American Beaver	L							1		L			L					L	L		L		
Deer Mouse				t				С					t	t .									
Muskrat	L			L		L	L	1	L	L			L	L		1		L			L		L
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole																							
Meadow Vole																							
Vole species	t			t									t					t					t
House Mouse																							
Mouse species									t	t													t
American Porcupine		1	t		2				1	t	1	t		1			t				t		
Coyote	1	2	t	1	1	t	t	С	8	1	3	1	2	6	1	9	t	2	t	1	t	t	1
Gray Wolf												t								С	t		
Red Fox								С				t	t		t	5	1	t	1		t		
Raccoon										t		t											
American Marten																							
Fisher			t																				
Ermine																			1		t	t	
Long-tailed Weasel																1							
Weasel species			t							t				t									
American Mink				t						t													
American Badger															d		t						
Striped Skunk							s							s			t	s					
River Otter																							
Mountain Lion																							
Canada Lynx												t									С		
Mule Deer							4	2	17		33			52	17	27	t					4	8
White-tailed Deer	4	7	6	2	29			7	75	13	11	2	4	20	8	18	t	4	2		7	14	2
Deer species						t																t	
Moose			С		5					3		t	1			1	t			С		-	t
Elk			c									t	•					t	t		8		
Pronghorn											60				105					С			22
American Bison											1				.05								
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD	7	10	7	6	39	0	4	21	105	21	110	12	11	81	132	77	2	10	6	1	17	18	33
ON COUNT DAY TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	3	3	2	3	5	0	1	6	5	5	7	4	5	5	5	10	2	3	4	1	3	2	4
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	3	0	4	4	0	2	3	0	4	6	0	8	5	3	2	0	7	4	3	1	6	4	5
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	2	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	4	1	0	2	0	1
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	8	3	8	8	5	3	6	10	10	14	7	12	12	10	8	10	9	11	8	5	12	5	9

Table 1.3. 43rd Saskatchewan Christmas Mammal Count - 2015.

	LAST MTN. LAKE NWA, 29 DEC 2015	лтн, 5	LOVE-TORCH RIVER, 27 DEC 2015	5	AKE, 5	λ, 5	MOOSE MTN. P.P., 4 JAN 2016	5	5	NISBET FOREST NW., 26 DEC 2015	NISBET FOREST W., 1 JAN 2016	5	5.		2	SERT,	5,	QU'APPELLE DAM, 20 DEC 2015	5	2	ROSCOMMON S.D., 28 DEC 2015	2	KE (Q.V.), 5
	MTN. I C 201	LEADER NORTH, 29 DEC 2015	-TORC	LUSELAND, 26 DEC 2015	MEADOW LAKE, 26 DEC 2015	MOOSE JAW, 16 DEC 2015	SE MT I 2016	MORSE, 23 DEC 2015	NIPAWIN, 23 DEC 2015	T FOR	T FOR I 2016	ODESSA, 28 DEC 2015	PIERCE LAKE, 30 DEC 2015	PIKE LAKE, 2 JAN 2016	PONTEIX, 28 DEC 2015	PRINCE ALBERT, 20 DEC 2015	QU'APPELLE, 30 DEC 2015	PPELL C 201	RAYMORE, 25 DEC 2015	REGINA, 27 DEC 2015	OMM C 201	ROULEAU, 28 DEC 2015	ROUND LAKE (14 DEC 2015
SPECIES	AST 9 DE	EAD 9 DE	OVE	USEI 6 DE	NEAI 6 DE	400 6 DE	100 JAN	AOR:	IIPA\	NISBE 16 DE	JAN	DES 8 DE	IERC 30 DE	IKE	ONT 8 DE	RING 0 DE	2U'A :0 DE	3U'A :0 DE	AYN 5 DE	EGII	SOSC 8 DE	SOUL 8 DE	OUN 4 DE
Shrew species	7	1 7	_ C	7	22	~ ~	∠ 4	2	~ ~	~ 7	~ ~	7	<u>т</u> к	P 2	7 Z	<u>د</u> ر	0 m 1	7	R 7	& 7	æ 7	R 7	~ ←
Nuttall's Cottontail		1															t	3					
Snowshoe Hare		•	t										t	t		t	t		t	t	t		t
White-tailed Jack Rabbit	2	2		1				3				2		t	t		2			42	t		
Eastern Grey Squirrel	_	_										_					_			5			
Eastern Fox Squirrel	1					7	1					3					5			134			
American Red Squirrel			10		3	,	2		9		2		2	14		10				131	t		4
Northern Flying-Squirrel			10											, ,		10							
Northern Pocket Gopher																			d				
American Beaver						L							1						ŭ.				L
Deer Mouse			2	2		-							•				С						t
Muskrat			_	_				L									L		L				L
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole			1					-									1		-		6		-
Meadow Vole																							t
Vole species	t							1							t	t				t	t		
House Mouse								'							ı					·	8		
Mouse species								t						t	t	t	3			t	0		
American Porcupine								1			1	1			·	·	t	1		·	t		
Coyote	2	2	5	7		1		35			1	2	t	1	2	1	3	4		2	1	1	5
-		2		/		1		30		m			L	1	2	1	3	4)
Gray Wolf Red Fox			t		1			_	1			1											
			t		1			С	1	С	3	1 5			t		t			t	t		t
Raccoon											3	5				t					t		
American Marten																							
Fisher																							
Ermine											1					t							
Long-tailed Weasel								t							t								
Weasel species														t							t		
American Mink						С											t			t			
American Badger								d				1			d						d		
Striped Skunk			С					S				1	_		m		С		S		S		
River Otter													t										
Mountain Lion																							
Canada Lynx		_												_									
Mule Deer	15	5			_	1		15				18		2	14	t .	3	43	_	8	6		3
White-tailed Deer	2	6	34	12	3			39	10	С	t	14	7	6	12	t	11	3	5	3	10		t
Deer species	t													t		t					t		
Moose												2	t	t			1	1	1		4	3	1
Elk			t																				
Pronghorn		2																					
American Bison																							
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	22	18	52	22	7	9	3	94	20	0	8	50	10	23	28	11	30	55	6	194	35	4	13
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	5	6	5	4	3	3	2	6	3	0	5	11	3	4	3	2	9	6	2	6	6	2	4
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS TOTAL SPECIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	6	5 2	9	5	0	3	5 0	9	0	5
OTHERWISE RECORDED																							
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	6	6	11	4	3	5	2	11	3	3	6	11	7	9	10	9	16	6	6	10	15	2	11

Table 1.4. 43rd Saskatchewan Christmas Mammal Count - 2015.

SPECIES	SASK. LANDING P.P., 4 JAN 2016 SASK.	RIVER FORKS, 3 JAN 2016	SASKATOON, 26 DEC 2015	SAWYER LAKE, 26 DEC 2015	SHAMROCK, 28 DEC 2015	SNOWDEN, 4 JAN 2016	SPINNEY HILL, 21 DEC 2015	SQUAW RAPIDS, 31DEC 2015	SWIFT CURRENT, 19 DEC 2015	THICKWOOD HILLS, 18 DEC 2015	TOGO, 5 JAN 2016	WEYBURN, 19 DEC 2015	WHITE BEAR, 31 DEC 2015	WHITEWOOD, 28 DEC 2015	WINGARD, 4 JAN 2016	YORKTON, 29 DEC 2015	# INDIVIDUALS SEEN/ HEARD COUNT DAY	# COUNTS SEEN/HEARD	# COUNTS RECORDED AS TRACKS	# COUNTS RECORDED AS OTHER	# COUNTS, COUNT PERIOD	# COUNTS, COUNT PERIOD & COUNT DAY	HIGH COUNT
Shrew species			t	t													1	1	5	0	1	7	1
Nuttall's Cottontail	1								t				1				10	6	7	0	0	13	3
Snowshoe Hare			1	c				t		t	5			4		t	13	8	28	0	1	37	4
White-tailed Jack Rabbit	1		1		t				t			1	t	t			64	13	21	0	2	36	42
Eastern Grey Squirrel									40							1	59	5	0	0	0	5	40
Eastern Fox Squirrel												14		8		2	205	14	1	0	1	16	134
American Red Squirrel		6	6	с		9	6	9		2	4			4	1		161	37	3	0	1	41	14
Northern Flying-Squirrel				С							3						6	2	0	0	2	4	5
Northern Pocket Gopher														d			0	0	0	2	0	2	0
American Beaver									С	L				L			2	2	0	16	1	19	1
Deer Mouse			t														4	2	6	0	2	10	2
Muskrat	L	L												L			2	2	0	24	0	26	1
Gapper's Red-Backed Vole																	9	4	0	0	0	4	6
Meadow Vole						t								t			2	1	2	0	0	3	2
Vole species	t		t	t			t	t		t							1	1	22	0	0	23	1
House Mouse	-		-			t		-									8	1	1	0	0	2	8
Mouse species			1	t									t				4	2	16	0	0	18	3
American Porcupine	t						1										11	10	9	0	1	20	2
Coyote	t	2	3	t	6			t	4	t	t	1	5	t		2	149	48	15	1	3	67	35
Gray Wolf		_	,	t	J				_		t					_	0	0	6	0	1	7	0
Red Fox	t			·	2				2	t	3		2	t	1		15	9	17	0	6	32	5
	L L									ι .	3			l	'			2	5	0		8	5
Raccoon											1						8				1		0
American Marten											1							0	0	0	1	1	
Fisher				t							4						0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Ermine				t							1						3	3	7	0	0	10	1
Long-tailed Weasel														t			2	2	5	0	1	8	1
Weasel species			1						_				t				1	1	6	0	1	8	1
American Mink				t					2								5	4	8	0	1	13	2
American Badger					d									d			1	1	1	5	0	7	1
Striped Skunk	m		m											S			1	1	2	10	2	15	1
River Otter				t				t									0	0	4	0	0	4	0
Mountain Lion																	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Canada Lynx																	0	0	2	0	1	3	0
Mule Deer	37				54		t		6		С		13				490	28	4	0	1	33	57
White-tailed Deer	50	2	7	С	2	3	t	3	11	3	22		12	7		t	758	56	11	0	2	69	123
Deer species			t		t			t									0	0	11	0	0	11	0
Moose	t			c							t			t			37	16	10	0	3	29	8
Elk		t		t							8			3	3		8	1	7	0	1	9	8
Pronghorn	19								15				62				223	6	0	0	1	7	105
American Bison																	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
TOTALS SEEN/HEARD ON COUNT DAY	108	10	20	0	64	12	7	12	80	5	47	16	95	26	5	5	2458						
TOTAL SPECIES SEEN/HEARD	5	3	7	0	4	2	2	2	7	2	8	3	6	5	3	3		32					
TOTAL SPECIES RECORDED BY TRACKS	5	1	4	10	2	2	3	5	2	4	3	0	3	6	0	3			27				
TOTAL SPECIES OTHERWISE RECORDED	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0				6			
SPECIES RECORDED COUNT PERIOD	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0					23		
TOTAL SPECIES COUNT PERIOD AND DAY	12	5	10	14	6	4	5	6	10	7	13	3	9	16	3	6						36	

THOUGHTS FROM ARTS CARES VOLUNTEERS

During the February break, Nature Saskatchewan was pleased to once again participate in the ARTS Cares program through the University of Regina. The program fits an estimated 50 students interested in volunteering for not-for-profits in their area of interest, and the students commit to volunteering a total of 15 hours each. As always, the students who arrived were intelligent, eager, and made a valuable contribution during their time working with us. Nature Saskatchewan would like to thank Hailey Rudniski and Tiffany Blampied for all of their hard work. We asked Hailey and Tiffany to each write a short article about their time with Nature Saskatchewan.

Tiffany Blampied 3rd year Biology student

During the February break, I participated in the Arts CARES program through the University of Regina and I was placed at Nature Saskatchewan. I did not really know what to expect, but went in with low expectations. During the week my expectations were exceeded and I was able to connect and work on tasks that were interesting, engaging, and relatable to my field of study in Biology. The Nature Saskatchewan team is a wonderful, inviting group that creates a very comfortable atmosphere to be around. I was warmly welcomed and felt appreciated during my 15 hours of volunteer service. I was able to do many interesting things such as research and create a Monarch butterfly factsheet, create Piping Plover jokes, and create yard maps for several Regina schools. These tasks were very meaningful and engaging and I felt like we were really able to help out the staff. I would recommend to others to get involved with this organization as they really strive to get people involved through their various programs such as Nature Quest and Stewards of Saskatchewan. I would like to stay in contact and volunteer with them in the future to promote conservation and conservation

education. As well, I am hoping to go out with them on their Spring Meet in June. Nature Saskatchewan is a great organization and I felt my time was very productive and well spent. Thank you for having me for the week!

Hailey Rudniski 4th year Environmental Biology major

Volunteering for Nature
Saskatchewan was a rewarding and insightful experience. I originally expected to be treated with strict professionalism and to be doing menial tasks, such as filing or organizing. I was pleasantly surprised by the warm welcome Tiffany and I received and with how comfortable it was talking with our supervisors, Becky Quist and Ashley Fortney. They took a direct interest in who we were and what we were aspiring to do. It made us feel more like equals rather than just volunteers.

The tasks they gave us were more meaningful than expected. I prepared and put together the 2016 Plantwatch newsletter that covered the 2015 spring season. It was interesting to see how the program worked and to read the reports submitted by PlantWatchers across Saskatchewan. It showed that a lot of people cared and wanted to help in Nature Saskatchewan's

conservation efforts. The amount of effort that went into the newsletter was a great example of how much the employees care about these stewardship programs and the people who participate in them by putting in article summaries of relevant topics, poems about nature, and highlighting a particularly interesting plant of Saskatchewan, catering to a wide variety of interests.

On the Thursday, Becky and Ashley took us out in the afternoon to show us how ground-truthing worked and why it was necessary. Ground-truthing is to test how accurate their online maps are in regards to the identifications put in by a person. This required us to visit the site being assessed with a printed copy of the map and correcting any incorrect or missing information. It was great to get outside and stretch our identification skills out. It was difficult identifying plants in the winter but it was fun taking educated guesses and bouncing ideas off of one another.

Overall, my time with Nature Saskatchewan, although short, was wonderful. Between the fantastic people we met and the insightful tasks left to us as volunteers. I have come out of this experience with a better understanding of the work Nature Saskatchewan does and of the importance of volunteers to organizations such as this one. Without volunteers, Nature Saskatchewan would work at a significantly lower capacity, if at all. Whether they are citizen scientists volunteering to watch plants or volunteers helping where they can at the office. Nature Saskatchewan and its entire staff value all the work volunteers do with warmth and great gratitude. 🖊

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A male mountain bluebird. Photo credit: Lorne Scott

MY LIFE WITH BLUEBIRDS

Lorne Scott

Box 995, Indian Head, SK SOG 2K0 lorne.scott@sasktel.net

I was born in Indian Head, Saskatchewan and raised on a mixed farm south of town in the Aspen Parkland region of the province.

When my grandparents settled on the farm 100 years ago in 1915, the aspen bluffs were much smaller in size and maturity, as frequent prairie fires prevented the trees from getting well established. However, with settlement and cultivation, widespread grass fires were greatly reduced, allowing the aspens, willows and other shrubs to become established and reach maturity within a few decades. Aspen poplar, sometimes called "the walking tree," spread by new saplings growing up and out from the existing bluff. The ability for aspens to spread is clearly evident where whole parcels of land that have never been broke are now pretty well covered by an aspen forest.

Fifty years ago and beyond, farming was much more in harmony with nature. The aspen bluffs, shrubs, wetlands and fragmented remains of native grass interspersed by cultivated fields provided a rich and diverse landscape. The existing bluffs and wetlands were left untouched as open grassy areas were plowed for the growing of crops. Bluffs provided fire wood and fence posts, and the sloughs (wetlands) provided hav for winter feed and grazing, as did the remaining patches of grasslands. Winter brought daily chores and the harvesting of furs such as weasel, muskrat, rabbit and coyote.

Each season brought its own sights and sounds on the farm. Spring saw the return of many birds, some of which stayed to nest. Summer brought an array of wild flowers, such as cowslips (Hoary Pucoons) growing along well-worn paths followed by the cows coming home for the twice-daily milking. Fall was harvest time for garden produce, field crops and wild game.

Historically, both eastern bluebirds (Sialia sialis) and mountain bluebirds (S. currucoides) were relatively uncommon at Indian Head and in the vicinity of the Qu'Appelle Valley. The lack of nesting sites available prior to 1940 no doubt limited their numbers. In Manley Callin's book, Birds of the Qu'Appelle 1857 - 1979, observations of both bluebird species are documented as rare, irregular and a relative new comer prior to 1940.

The early homesteads and equipment often contained nooks and crannies suitable for bluebird nesting sites, and it was considered a good omen to have bluebirds nesting close to one's home. Perhaps the most frequently used bluebird nesting site was the twine box on the

old binder used for cutting sheaves. By 1950, the arrival of non-native and aggressive house sparrows and European starlings began to take over bluebird nesting sites. Remaining bluebirds were driven away from farm yards, and nested in woodpecker holes and rotted aspen snags.

My first recollection of bluebirds was around 1960, before I kept records. A pair of mountain bluebirds was nesting in the twine box on the binder, and as I went near their nest, they would dive bomb me in an attempt to scare me away and it worked. My first recorded observation of mountain bluebirds was on April 11, 1963. Since then, I have recorded the spring arrival dates of the first bluebirds each year. The earliest spring arrival was February 22, 2000. A lone male was seen by my Uncle Hartley Scott and friend, Cliff Kenney, on the outskirts of Indian Head. I saw my first single male on March 4 that year. The latest arrival date documented was April 13, 1975.

It was recognized that bluebirds would use nesting boxes, and over the years people across North America built tens of thousands of boxes for all three species of bluebirds. Dr. T.E. Musselman of Illinois is credited as being the first person to set out a number of nest boxes along a country road side. Thus, in 1934, the concept of a "Bluebird Trail" was established.

In Canada, John and Nora Lane at Brandon, Manitoba formed the Brandon Junior Birders in 1959 and subsequently set out thousands of bluebird nest boxes. Over the next few decades eastern, mountain and western bluebirds (*S. mexicana*) all benefited from the efforts of dedicated individuals and organizations. Bluebird numbers increased substantially in those

Number of mountain bluebirds, eastern bluebirds and tree swallows banded from 1969 to 2015.

395

1969

EASTERN BLUBIRDS

5

1970 601 849 1971 700 1450 1972 684 1396 1973 682 15 1794 1974 900 1698 1975 792 7 2299 1976 169 2 1977 243 5 179 1978 262 515 1979 136 300 1980 147 38 1981 189 4 1982 4 4 1983 1 4 1984 4 144 1987 23 166 1988 166 9 70 1989 126 5 1990 179 9 9 1991 192 4 199 1992 116 4 4 1993 194 9 117 1995 152 2				
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2009 32 183 2010 10 209 2011 6 216 2012 9 208 2013 3 259 2014 6 310 2015 322	2007	76		176
2010 10 209 2011 6 216 2012 9 208 2013 3 259 2014 6 310 2015 322	2008	62		138
2011 6 216 2012 9 208 2013 3 259 2014 6 310 2015 322	2009	32		183
2012 9 208 2013 3 259 2014 6 310 2015 322	2010	10		209
2013 3 259 2014 6 310 2015 322	2011	6		216
2014 6 310 2015 322	2012	9		208
2015 322	2013	3		259
	2014	6		310
TOTAL 8,243 70 15,545	2015			322
	ΓΟΤΑL	8,243	70	15,545



Male mountain bluebird bringing food to young in a twine box on an old binder. Photo credit: Myrna Pearman

areas where bluebird trails were established across North America.

I made my first nest box in 1963 at the age of 15. My first boxes were placed around the farm yard and I was quite happy to have house sparrows occupy them. As I recall, the sparrow population was higher back then than it is today.

In 1965, I placed some boxes along fence lines out in the fields away from the yard. May 24, 1965 was one of the most thrilling days of my life when I discovered a pair of mountain bluebirds using one of my nest boxes. The excitement was short-lived as a few days later, a road construction crew removed the post and box and left them laying on the ground. A second pair of mountain bluebirds was discovered in a box on June 21, but a domestic cat destroyed the nest and young. At last, on July 10, a pair of bluebirds raised five young in a third box. I also found two pairs of bluebirds nesting in old woodpecker holes in aspen trees that summer.

An additional 60 nest boxes, mostly made from hollow trees, were set out in 1966 along road sides and neighbours' fence lines. Six pairs of mountain bluebirds and two pairs of eastern bluebirds successfully nested. I had access to scrap lumber from a construction site and had some 200 nest boxes ready to set out in the

spring of 1967. At least 19 pairs of mountain bluebirds nested in them.

On May 1, 1967, I began to work at the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History (Royal Saskatchewan Museum). The following winter, I was given permission to use the carpenter shop at the Museum after hours to build nest boxes, if I supplied the lumber. About 200 nest boxes were ready to set out in the spring. I joined my bluebird trail at Broadview, Saskatchewan where it connected with John Lane's trail from Brandon, Manitoba. At least 50 pairs of mountain bluebirds nested in my boxes in 1968.

In 1969, I had obtained my own federal Bird Banding Permit, thanks to the references from renowned bird bander, Dr. Stuart Houston, and long-time naturalist and Western Producer columnist, Doug Gilroy. More than 100 pairs of mountain bluebirds and two pairs of eastern bluebirds nested that year, with 395 mountain and five eastern bluebirds being banded.

On April 5 of the following year, I joined my bluebird trail at Raymore, Saskatchewan, with the Saskatoon Junior Naturalists' trail led by Stuart and Mary Houston. This addition completed the longest bluebird trail in the world, with John and Nora Lane's trail based in Brandon extending from near Winnipeg,

west to Broadview, and my trail joining their trail at Broadview and extending west to Raymore, where it linked up with the Saskatoon Junior Naturalists' trail. The Junior Naturalists' trail extended westward from Saskatoon towards North Battleford, Saskatchewan.

During the 1970s, which was the peak operation of this longest bluebird trail in the world, thousands of nest boxes were spread over many hundreds of miles. It is estimated that 5.000 mountain bluebirds and 10,000 tree swallows fledged each year from this trail. For various reasons, the trail eventually fell into disrepair and no longer exists as it once did. However, many other individuals picked up the challenge and have placed thousands of nest boxes throughout Saskatchewan and the prairie provinces in an effort to assist bluebirds.

By 1975, I had made and placed some 2,000 nest boxes along many miles of road. I would check all the boxes four times a year, each trip covering 800 kilometres (500 miles) and taking four days to complete. The first trip was to record and band nesting bluebird females. On the second trip, young bluebirds and nesting adult female tree swallows were banded. Trip number three was to band young Tree Swallows. A final trip in the fall was made to clean out the boxes.

Big changes occurred in 1976, when I opted to move to my uncle and aunt's farm to do my own













All photos: Lorne Scott

farming along with continued
employment as the Park Naturalist at
Wascana Centre Authority in Regina,
which made for a 160-kilometre
round-trip daily commute. I also got
married that year. Needless to say,
priorities dictated that I would not be
able to maintain all my nest boxes.
Fortunately, volunteers monitored
and maintained portions of my trail

and added their own nest boxes.

By the late 1970s, changes were evident on the landscape as aspen bluffs and natural grasslands were being increasingly cleared and plowed under. Raccoons had arrived and became a new predator that bluebirds and trail operators had to contend with. I found that in the early 1980s, these intelligent animals

	FIRST OBSERVED ARRIVAL DATES OF MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS BETWEEN 1963 AND 2015:																				
				1970	March	27		1980	March	25		1990	March	3		2000	February	22	2010	March	13
				1971	March	13		1981	March	3		1991	March	19		2001	March	17	2011	March	18
				1972	March	11		1982	March	16		1992	March	12		2002	March	30	2012	March	10
1963	April	11		1973	March	4		1983	March	29		1993	March	22		2003	March	29	2013	March	29
1964	April	1		1974	April	9		1984	March	26		1994	March	13		2004	March	23	2014	April	5
1965	April	8		1975	April	13		1985	March	14		1995	March	14		2005	March	27	2015	March	30
1966	March	12		1976	March	22		1986	March	13		1996	April	8		2006	March	28			
1967	March	23		1977	March	17		1987	March	27		1997	March	22		2007	March	11			
1968	March	5		1978	March	25		1988	March	2		1998	March	25		2008	March	16			
1969	March	23		1979	March	16		1989	March	25		1999	March	14		2009	March	20			

would sometimes retrace my steps to each nest box where they would feed on nesting females, eggs and young. Because of their predation, I chose not to visit or band any bluebirds or swallows between 1982 and 1984.

In an attempt to reduce raccoon predation, boxes are now retrofitted with a wire mesh raccoon guard around the entrance. The guards work with some success. These strong predators are sometimes able to rip apart older nest boxes in order to get at the contents inside.

Over the past 30 years, I have continued to maintain, monitor and band birds in boxes around the farm and nearby areas. A friend also maintains a short trail nearby where we continue to band bluebirds. Unfortunately, the number of mountain bluebirds nesting on the farm has declined over the past 20 years. This decline is puzzling, because my farm is one of the few places where the natural landscape has been preserved and the number of available nest boxes has actually increased. It appears to me that the bluebirds are simply not returning in the spring.

During the peak years in the 1970s, 25 to 30 pairs of mountain bluebirds nested on the farm each year, and the numbers were still fairly good in the 1980s. However, there was evidence of decline in the 1990s. The following information is a sobering reality: In 2008, 10 pairs nested on the farm. In 2009, six pairs nested. Only three pairs nested in 2010. Two pairs nested in 2011 and again in 2012. One pair fledged three young in 2013. One pair nested in 2014 and a raccoon ripped open the nest box devouring the young. For the first time in 50 years, no bluebirds nested on the farm in 2015.

The numbers of mountain bluebirds observed in the spring has also declined significantly. In 2015,



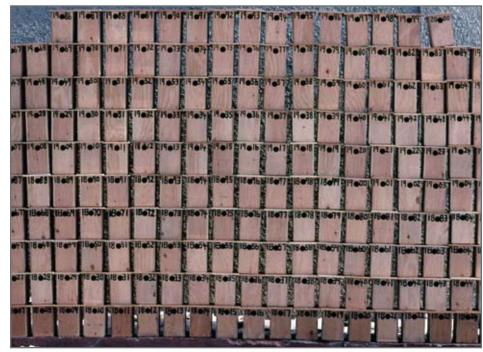
Male eastern bluebird. Photo credit: Fred Lahrman

I visited familiar bluebird migration haunts several times looking for these harbingers of spring. I finally saw a lone female on March 30 and a lone male later in April.

Other bluebird trail operators in Saskatchewan have also noted a big decline in the number of nesting bluebirds. Myrna Pearman at the Ellis Bird Farm near Red Deer, Alberta has also noted a significant decline in nesting mountain bluebirds in the area northeast of Red Deer. Ironically, they seem to have increased in other

local areas, such as the Lousana area southeast of Red Deer. The cause of the decline is likely due to a number of factors including late spring snow storms, habitat loss and food supply.

Each year I set out a few more nest boxes on the farm and the natural habitat will be protected in perpetuity through a Conservation Easement with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation. I will eagerly be looking for the first bluebirds arriving on a mild south breeze in March. Maybe a few will return to nest?



Some 200 nest boxes built over winter and ready to set out in early spring. Photo credit: Lorne Scott

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CHANGES TO OUR PUBLICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

To our devoted membership and long-time supporters, we would like to share our excitement with you in the fresh, newly refurbished Blue Jay. We hope you enjoy the result of the many collaborations and efforts that have brought it to life.

With this change of format of the Blue Jay, we will be able to offer an electronic version to our members in the very near future. The electronic version, once available, will be in full colour. Once our website is equipped (tentatively July 2016), members will be able to login with a personalized ID and password to be able to view the material.

Recognizing the increased costs in serving our members (printing, postage and no membership fee increase in over 20 years), the Nature Saskatchewan Board of Directors will be presenting to the membership a proposal to change membership structure and fees at our upcoming Annual Meeting on June 19 in Wolseley. Any changes in membership fees must be ratified by the membership at an Annual meeting.

If the membership approves the proposed membership fee structure at the Annual Meeting in June, annual membership fees will remain at the current rate until November, 2016. Memberships received after November 1 will be enrolled under the new fee structure and receive a 14-month membership.

All existing three and five-year memberships will be honoured until they expire. If the new membership fees are adopted at the June Annual Meeting, three and fiveyear memberships will not be offered.

If there are any questions or concerns, or if you are seeking more information, please contact Nature Saskatchewan at 1-800-667-4668 (toll-free)/(306) 780-9273 or info@naturesask.ca

The following are the proposed changes to be discussed and ratified in June:

All memberships will be based on an annual subscription from January 1 to December 31 of the calendar year.

- 1. With the transition to an annual membership, three and five-year memberships will be phased out.
- 2. Existing Life memberships will endure and remain unchanged.
- 3. New Life memberships will be offered at an increased fee pending board approval.
- 4. Student and Senior memberships will be offered at a discounted fee for the print version. Individual and Family will remain separate categories.
- 5. The fee structure will be based on being an "electronic" subscriber or a "print" subscriber. "Print" members fees are based on print and postage costs.
- 6. Institutional and Foreign membership costs will increase.
- 7. Fee changes are as follows:
- Individual \$25/yr Electronic Individual \$40/yr – Print
- Family \$30/yr Electronic Family \$45/yr – Print
- Student \$25/yr Electronic Student \$35/yr – Print
- Senior \$25/yr Electronic Senior \$35/yr – Print
- Organization/Institution \$30/yr Electronic Organization/Institution \$60/yr - Print
- Foreign/Outside Canada \$30/yr Electronic Foreign/Outside Canada \$60/yr - Print

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The Frenchman River between Ravenscrag and Eastend. Photo credit: Annie McLeod

HUMAN NATURE

Annie McLeod, Blue Jay Editor

Living in Saskatchewan, it is quite easy to find beautiful places that connect a person to all that is around and beyond. But even once so many of these places have been discovered, there are always those few spots that particularly stand out — those gems that deeply solidify that it is indeed human nature to love, and be at one with, nature itself.

Between Eastend and the ghost town of Ravenscrag lies what I consider one of the most enchanting places in the province. The gravel road connecting the two towns — Ravenscrag Road — runs along the Frenchman River, and to either side are hills marked with bands of white mud. The numerous layers visible within these hills reveal the history of the land throughout the ages, dating back to a time when dinosaurs roamed our planet, and instill a sense of wonder at everything this land has seen throughout the years.

The Frenchman River cuts through grasslands that stand still together or sway in a series of waves, dancing with the wind as it makes its way through the valley. The air smells sweet and fresh from the grasses and wildflowers, and the wind sounds as though it is carrying messages that perhaps only the creatures on this land can comprehend. Turkey vultures can be seen teetering in the air as they circle overhead scavenging for food. Taller shrubs reveal birds such as yellow warblers, and grouse forage within the lush landscape. In the evening, ring-necked pheasants appear on the old rail lines and rise from the grasses to cross Ravenscrag Road — cocks traveling ahead, safely leading the hens.

One of the mud-lined hills that can be seen from the road is Jones Peak. From here, you can stand on the valley rim and stare out at the view that was perfected over millions of years. The air is clean and crisp to breathe in as the sun and wind kiss your face, and various birds — from raptors to swallows and bluebirds

— can be heard and seen moving
across the sky above and the land
below. Everything between Eastend
and Ravenscrag is in front of you at
once, and while a picture may hope
to capture the beauty seen, only your
mind and soul can capture what you
feel.

While many spots in Saskatchewan are special to me, this section of the Frenchman River — and the area that surrounds it — is somewhere I yearn to be a part of, year after year. Whether standing on the valley floor or on top of Jones Peak, I can't help but become abundantly aware that all my senses are working together in unison, causing me to stop thinking and to only feel. At this time I am fully present — not only am I in nature, but I am at one with nature.

Human Nature is a new series for Blue Jay. In each issue, we will feature someone's favourite nature spot in Saskatchewan. Please contact Annie McLeod if you are interested in this opportunity.



Photo credit: Kerry Hecker



Mystery Photo December 2015 (left)

ANSWER:

This photo has all the elements of a murder mystery. A weasel has ventured across the open ice of a dugout, and disappears midway. Meanwhile, it is known that a Great Horned Owl has been hunting in the area.

- David J. Larson

Mystery Photo Spring 2016 (above)

THE QUESTION IS: To which bird do these feathers belong?

Please send your answers to Blue Jay editor Annie McLeod at bluejay@naturesask.ca

Those with correct answers will be entered into a draw for a prize from Nature Saskatchewan.

Have you taken a picture that may make for a good mystery photo? Send it to Annie at the email address above.



Coyote near Climax, Saskatchewan. Photo credit: Randy McCulloch

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