

## **Banff National Park**

**Date:** May 28, 29, 2016

**Compiler:** Brenda Lepitzki

**Participants:** **BBWK** (Banff Bird walk group): Amar Athwal, Jennifer Kleinitz, Jill Beleyne, Tomo Fujimori, and 25 participants(= 29); **UMJL** (University of Manitoba at Johnson Lake group): Nicola Koper, Michael Campbell, Michael Bell, 6 students (= 9).

**Area Covered:** Day 1: Bow River bridge to Recreation Grounds & stables, to Sundance Road and Rainy Bay, to Cave and Basin marsh. Day 2: Johnson Lake trail and beaver pond, plus the road from highway to Johnson Lake.

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 5 to 12°C

Wind speed: (light to gusty) 5 to 20 km/hr. Wind direction: from west

Precipitation: none in morning, light rain in afternoon

Comments: sky cloudy

Day 2: Temp. 8 to 16°C

Wind speed: NA Wind direction: NA

Precipitation: NA

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 27.7 km; by vehicle 12.1 km; on foot 15.6 km.

Total Team Hours: 8.0 hr; by vehicle 0.5 hr; on foot 7.5 hr.

**Number of Species:** 66 (+ 12CW)

**Number of Birds:** 412 (+ 16 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** 12 species: Cinnamon Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Western Wood-pewee, Least Flycatcher, European Starling, Magnolia Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, House Sparrow.

**Highlights:** Banff Bird walk: "The top highlight was, without question, a Northern Mockingbird, a species that has been found in the park on only a handful of occasions over the years. Luckily, Amar got a photo to confirm the identification." Jason Rogers. U. Manitoba: "Warbling Vireo, Violet-green Swallow, Sora, Great Blue Heron" Nicola Koper.

## **Beauvais Lake Provincial Park**

**Date:** June 1, 2016

**Compiler:** Teresa Dolman

**Participants:** Douglas Dolman, Teresa Dolman, Brian Hoffe, Pat Lucas, Peter Sherrington

**Area Covered:** Various trails throughout the Park

**Weather:**

Day 1: Temp. 14 to 22°C

Wind speed: 0 to 22 km/hr. Wind direction: SW

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 12 km; by vehicle 2 km; on foot 10 km.

Total Team Hours: 8.5 hr; by vehicle 0.5 hr; on foot 8 hr.

**Number of Species:** 66 + 4 CW

**Number of Birds:** 397 + 4 CW

**Other species seen during count week:** Green-winged Teal, Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Alder Flycatcher

**Highlights:** Three "new" species were added to the count list for the Park – Gadwall, Ring-necked Pheasant and Cape May Warbler. Brown Creeper was recorded for only the second time in the count's history, and Common Grackle for only the third time. The 66 species found is above the long-term average of 58 for this count.

### **BowKan Birders**

**Date:** May 28 & 29, 2016

**Compiler:** Cliff Hansen

**Participants:** Kevin Barker, Hope & Cassidy Barwell, Dean & Jean Cooper, Nancy Davis, Gian-Duri Giger, Marilynn & Bert Dyck, Ethan Denton, Monica Dragoz, Cliff & Margo Hansen, Jason & Laura Reid, Rose Reid, Hanne Seidel, Anita Walker, Bill Wilson, Eva Zidek

**Area Covered:** 15 km diameter circle centered on the north face of Mount McGillivray, just south of Exshaw.

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 2 to 15°C

Wind speed: light to 10 gusts 20km/hr. Wind direction: South

Precipitation: light showers

Comments: sun & cloud

Day 2: Temp. 5 to 15°C

Wind speed: light to 10 gusts 20km/hr. Wind direction: Southwest

Precipitation: nil

Comments: sun & cloud

### **Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 154km; by vehicle 87; on foot 67 km

Total Team Hours: 53 hr; by vehicle 4 hr; on foot 49 hr.

**Number of Species:** 105

**Number of Birds:** 2384

**Highlights:** Large numbers of swallows and meeting a Black Bear.

### **Brooks Lake Newell no information submitted beyond the spreadsheet**

### **Buffalo Lake**

**Date:** June 2, 2016

**Compiler:** Lee Carothers

**Participants:** Lee Carothers, Wilma Zurfluh

**Area Covered:** North of Stettler, farmyard and north of Stettler

### **Weather:**

Day 1: Temp. 20 to 24°C

Wind speed: not recorded Wind direction: not recorded

Precipitation: not recorded

### **Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 37 km; by vehicle 35 km, on foot 2 km.

Total Team Hours: 5 hr; by vehicle 2 hr; on foot 3 hr.

**Number of Species:** 57

**Number of Birds:** 629

**Highlights:** hearing the bittern

**Calgary and area**

**Date:** May 28-29, 2016

**Compiler:** Melanie Seneviratne, Andrew Hart, Terry Poulton

**Participants:** 84+, including Aidan Vidal, Andrea MacDonald, Andrew Hart, Andrew Slater, Anne Elliott, Bernie Diebolt, Bill Wilson, Blake Weis, Bob Lefebvre, Brian Elder, Bruce Barnetson, Carole Hachey, Colin Young, Dan & Cindy Parliament, Dan Arndt, Darlene Shymkiw, Darren Batke, Dave Vernon, Diana Keyte, Don Magnusson, Don Stiles, Doug Collister, Ena Spalding, Frank Hennessey, Gary Malcolm, George Best, Gus Yaki, Hank Vanderpool, Howard Heffler, Ian Halladay, Janet Gill, Jean Dunn, Jean Philippe Gravel, Jerry Pilny, Jim St. Laurent, Joan & Wayne Walker, John Bargman, John Thompson, Judy ?, Ken Havard, Kingsley Blades, Kristin O-Connell, Laura Ewtushik, Lenora & Dick Flynn, Linda Bailey, Lorrie & John Anderson, Lynn & Rich Moore, Lynn Gratz, Maria ?, Marion Mackie, Mark Rubensohn, Melanie Seneviratne, Mike Bentley, Mike Mulligan, Nicole & Simone Pellerin, Nimali Seneviratne, Pat Farley, Pat Mitchell, Peter Hoyer, Phil Cram, Phil Stiles, Ray Wershler, Rob Worona, Rose Painter, Sandy Ayer, Sandy Cooke, Sid Andrews, Stephen Spring, Su Konopnicki, Terry Korolyk, Terry Poulton, Tim Allison, Tony Timmons, and others not identified.

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 0 to 17°C

Wind speed: 0 to 30 km/hr. Wind direction: variable

Precipitation: local light showers

Comments: mainly sunny, but cloudy and windy in mountains in SW sometimes

Day 2: Temp. 6 to 23°C

Wind speed: 0 to 20 km/hr. Wind direction: variable

Precipitation: Local rain

Comments: Mainly sunny, variably cloudy

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 4704 km; by vehicle 4448; on foot 257 km.

Total Team Hours: 406 hr; by vehicle 236 hr; on foot 171 hr.

**Number of Species:** 215 (+ 8 CW)

**Number of Birds:** 85659 (+ 10 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:**

3 Eurasian Wigeon, seen by Ena Spalding, John Bargman and Andrew Slater in Springbank, Water Valley areas;

1 Dusky Grouse, seen by Lenora and Dick Flynn in Elbow River Basin;

1 Turkey Vulture, seen by Gus Yaki and group in Fish Creek Provincial Park;

1 Hudsonian Godwit seen by Ken Havard and Melanie Seneviratne east of Calgary;

1 Chestnut-sided Warbler seen in Edworthy Park by Ena Spalding and John Bargman;

1 Black-and-White Warbler seen in S Glenmore Park by Dave Arnold, Stephen Spring, Janet Gill and Bernie Diebolt;

1 Yellow-breasted Chat seen in N Glenmore Park by Dan Arndt, Rose Painter and others;

1 Scarlet Tanager seen by Ray Wershler in S Glenmore Park

**Highlights:**

*Rare or Uncommonly Reported Species*, by Area:

Langdon Slough	Arctic Tern
Votiers Flats	Le Conte's Sparrow, Northern Saw Whet Owl, Turkey Vulture (count week)
Nosehill Park	Long Eared Owl, Brown Thrasher
Edworthy Park	Broad-winged Hawk
Springbank	Baird's Sparrow
Priddis	Black-headed Grosbeak
Water Valley	25 White-winged crossbills (compared to none last year), Broad-winged Hawk, 2 Wood Ducks (haven't seen them in 10+ years), Great Grey Owls, Sandhill Cranes, Yellow Rail, Upland Sandpiper, Sedge Wren
Millarville	Bobolinks, Sandhill Cranes (both 1st time in this area for the count)
Mt Lorette/Kananaskis	7 Clarks Nutcrackers, MacGillivray's Warbler, surprisingly no reported raptors
Bow Valley PP	Magnolia Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Red Crossbill
Longview	Sharp Tailed Grouse
North Strathmore	16 Black Bellied Plovers
S. Strathmore/Marseland	Snow Goose, Sabine's Gull
South Glenmore Park	Scarlet Tanager (count week)

**Record or near-Record Numbers** of Trumpeter Swan (20), many of the common duck species, American White Pelican, Double-Crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-Shinned Hawk, Northern Harrier, Yellow Rail (6 from 2 areas), Sandhill Crane (12), Solitary Sandpiper (20), many of the common locally-nesting shorebirds, Eurasian Collared-Dove (55), Great Horned Owl, Northern Pygmy Owl (6), Long-eared Owl (1), Ruby-throated Hummingbird (7), Clark's Nutcracker (8), Purple Martin (25), Mountain Bluebird, Tennessee Warbler, Cape May Warbler (47), American Redstart (13), Ovenbird (33), Swamp Sparrow (9).

**First ever** (in Calgary MSC) Sedge Wren seen by Andrew Slater in Water Valley area (2) and another during Count Week in Cochrane area.

**Species seen only occasionally seen during MSC:** 1 Snow Goose, 1 Sharp-tailed Grouse, 1 Northern Goshawk, 2 Broad-winged Hawk, 1 Semipalmated Plover, 1 Sanderling, 1 Sabine's Gull, 1 Arctic Tern, 3 Black-backed Woodpecker, 1 Baird's Sparrow, 1 Black-Headed Grosbeak.

**First ever (in Calgary MSC):** Sedge Wren seen by Andrew Slater in Water Valley area (2) and another during Count Week in Cochrane area.

***Increase in the following species (numbers may not be high, but at minimum 50% more compared to last year):***

Trumpeter Swans, Wood Ducks, Ring-necked Ducks, White-winged scoter, Pied-billed grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Double-Crested Cormorant, Northern Harrier, Black-bellied plover, Marbled Godwit, Red-necked Phalarope, Red-naped Sapsucker, Purple Martin, Mountain Bluebird, Tennessee Warbler, Le Conte's Sparrow, Dark eyed Junco, White winged Crossbill.

***Decrease in the following species (numbers may not be high, but at minimum 50% less compared to last year):*** Canvasback, Western Grebe, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Olive sided, Alder & Willow Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Swainsons & Hermit Thrush, Pine Siskins

***Areas that showed a significant decrease in birds recorded were as follows:*** North & South Glenmore Park, Bow Valley & Mt. Lorette, Millarville, Frank Lake, South of Strathmore.

### **Central Alberta (Red Deer and area)**

**Date:** May 28, 29, 2016

**Compiler:** Judy Boyd

**Participants: 47** - Bill Barritt, Elizabeth Beaubien, Brian Biggs, Karin Bjorge, Myron Bjorge, Jim Boyce, Judy Boyd, Larry Boyd, Jerry Caddy, John Caddy, Marg Dewald, Cass Docherty, Bertha Ford, Eileen Ford, Stewart Ford, Estelle Froese, Sylvia Glass, Connie Haustein, Bill Heinsen, Liz Heinsen, Leon Holly, Scott Hoyland, Derek Johnson, Alex Jones, Elaine Jones, Keith Kline, Joyce Lemke, Jim Leslie, Susan Leslie, Claudia Lipski, Shelley Macauley, Gwen Marshall, Linda Marshall, Jackie Miller, Bonnie Mullin, Clint Nissen, Myrna Pearman, Doug Pedersen, Harley Siebold, Kim Siebold, Eric Sinton, Helga Sinton, Joanne Susat, Bev Thompson, Rickey P. Varjassy, Frank Weber, Yurgen Wiechert

**Area Covered:** Zone 1 (Red Deer), Zone 2 (Sylvan Lake), Zone 3 (Gull Lake), Zone 4 (Lacombe), Zone 5 (EBF), Zone 6 (Pine Lake), Zone 7 (Penhold), Zone 8 (Dickson, MRWC), Zone 11 (Rimbey/Bluffton), Zone 12 (Crestomere), Zone 16 (Lousana), Zone 17 (Bigelow Reservoir), Zone 19 (Bowden), Zone 25 (Three Hills), Zone 26 (Dry Island Buffalo Jump), and Zone 27 (Rocky Mountain House).

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 2 to 27°C

Wind speed: 0 to 30 km/hr. Wind direction: variable

Cloud cover: 0-90%

Day 2: Temp. 6 to 24°C

Wind speed: 0 to 25 km/hr. Wind direction: variable

Cloud cover: 0-75%

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 1364.13 km; by vehicle 1319.1 km; on foot 45.03 km.

Total Team Hours: 115.5 hr; by vehicle 72 hr.; on foot 41.5 hr, by kayak 2 hr; feederwatch 40 hr.

**Number of Species:** 140 + 1 CW

**Number of Birds:** 13126 + 1 CW

**Highlights:** Highest recorded numbers since 2000: 38 Common Merganser, 3 American Bittern (tied with 2008), 16 Great Blue Heron, 22 American Kestrel, 5 Greater

Yellowlegs, 11 Eurasian Collared-Dove, 2 Short-eared Owl, 3 Rufous Hummingbird, 47 Eastern Kingbird, 15 Warbling Vireo, 249 Purple Martin, 90 House Wren, 166 Mountain Bluebird, 213 Yellow Warbler. This was the first time since 2000 that a Short-eared Owl was counted.

Count Week bird was a Northern Saw-whet Owl seen on May 27.

Number of participants was down from last year's 48 to 47. The number of bird species also went down from last year's 146 to 140. (The highest recorded number of species since 2000 was in 2008: 153.) The count of individual birds was up from last year's 12620 to 13126.

### **Cold Lake Area Bird Count**

**Date:** 28-29 MAY 2016

**Compiler:** Ted Hindmarch

**Participants: 11 individual (7 parties Day 1, 5 parties Day 2):** Phil Shore, Lex Hedley, Nancy Dufour (Cold Lake); Ted Hindmarch (Gibbons); Chris Etue (Rapid View, Sask); Richard Klauke (Vilna); Del Huget (Edmonton); Geoff Peruniak (Athabasca), Matheiu Langlois (Ardmore); Alyssa Gladish **Plus** Feeder watch x 1 Mado Shore.

**Area Covered:** 20Mi RADIUS COUNT CIRCLE CENTER 5427.30N 11030.00W Cold Lake Provincial Park English Bay, North Bay, HorseShoe Bay and Marina, Jesse and Charlotte Lake, Bear Trap Lake, NE Moose Lake, Angling Lake, Ethel and Marie Lake, Manitokan Lake. This covered areas within WR51-55, WR40-45, WR33-34, WR10-11, and WR01, WR02-04, WR12-15, WR 22-25 Note: this year Margaurite, Tucker and Crane Lake were not covered due to weather and lack of time/survey teams.

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 10 to 14°C (Mean Temp 12°C)

Wind speed: Calm to 18 km/hr. Avg 10 km/hr. Wind direction: E switching to N/NW early afternoon

Precipitation: Rain 12mm

Comments: 18 hr 26 min of visible light. Temps below seasonal average (9 to 21C) (Scattered Clouds to Partly Cloudly. Winds above 15km/hr between 6AM – 2PM. Light rain with periods of heavier rain throughout count area from 4:30AM to 2:30PM, and again from 6PM to midnight.

Day 2: Temp. 9 to 16°C (Mean Temp 12°C)

Wind speed: 4 to 15 km/hr. Avg 6 km/hr. Wind direction: variable overnight, but fairly constant at N to NNE throughout daylight hours.

Precipitation: light showers through 6AM

Comments: Temps below seasonal average (9 to 21C). Overcast/Mostly Cloudy through day.

### **Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 831.9 km; by vehicle 812.5; on foot 19.4 km

Total Team Hours: 81.35 hr; by vehicle 57.3 hr; on foot 20.05 hr; Feederwatch 4 hr

**Number of Species:** 152 (+1 CW + 1 possible Long-tailed Jaeger)

**Number of Birds:** 12203 (+ 3 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** 3 – Stilt Sandpiper

**Highlights:** The total species reported this year (163) was once again below previous year averages, especially after count week species were added (+1). These results can be

partly attributed to the terrible birding weather encountered on the Saturday which was the day with the greatest number of participants available. However, the fact that many of the species were also not encountered during count week efforts was also indicative that there were probably few still around. Many migrant shorebird species were not encountered, and several other arctic or northern migrants had already passed through. The Cold Lake area was enjoying a fairly wet spring with good water levels in the wetlands. Weather conditions on Day 2 of the count were improved over day 1, but there were only 5 participants available that day.

Highlights from our C list (birds observed on less than 25% of counts) were Caspian Terns(6) roosting on the shore line along English Bay, and at least Sabine's Gulls (70) on Cold Lake (due to increased count reports on these species – they will both we moved to our B list next year). A single House Finch was also reported - a species that appears to moving its breeding territory further north but has not yet been consistently observed in the Cold Lake region.

Our B list (observed on only 25-75% of counts) included Snow Geese (2)at Jessie Lake (4 were seen earlier on count week – two of them blue variants.) At least one of these geese was injured and still present into the summer; Swainson's Hawk(1), a Rough-Legged Hawk (1); Sedge Wren(3) and Mountain Bluebird (1) and Gray Catbird (3).

For unusual first of sightings for our count, Richard Klauke observed a Jaeger species over the lake which he tentatively identified as a possible Long-Tailed Jaeger.

### **Coyote Lake**

**Date:** May 28, 2016

**Compiler:** Javan Green

**Participants:** Javan Green

**Area Covered:** Coyote Lake, Strawberry Creek, Pigeon Lake (NW corner)

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 8 to 17°C

Wind speed: 9 to 17 km/hr. Wind direction: N/A

Precipitation: N/A

Day 2: Temp. 6 to 19°C

Wind speed: 2 to 13 km/hr. Wind direction: N/A

Precipitation: N/A

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: ~193 km; by vehicle ~185; on foot ~8 km

Total Team Hours: 9 hr; by vehicle 3 hr; on foot 6 hr.

**Number of Species:** 90 (+ 1CW)

**Number of Birds:** 898 (+ 1CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1)

**Highlights:** Turkey Vulture, Connecticut Warbler, Northern Waterthrush

### **Crowsnest Pass Bird Count**

**Date:** May 25 and 26, 2016

**Compiler:** Marilyn Liddell

**Participants:** Pat Lucas, Denise Coccioloni-Amatto, Dawn Hall, Nel van Kamer, Raymond Toal, Chris Weickert, Diane Stinson, Karen Nicholson, Doug Nicholson, Mike

Bentley, Sheila Sowerby, Marilyn Liddell, Teresa Dolman, Doug Dolman, Judy Cooke, Lisa Gaunt

**Area Covered:** from Summit Lake at BC/Alberta border east to junction of Highways 3 & 22, north on 22, then west and north on side roads to the Gap. Specific Locations covered - Day 1: Summit Lake, Crowsnest Lake, wetlands east of Visitor Centre, Allison Road, Chinook Lake, Willow Drive and wetlands to the west, roadways north of Hwy 3, areas within Crowsnest Pass municipal boundaries from East Hillcrest Bridge to the wetlands between Coleman and Blairmore, Lundbreck, Cowley, Todd Creek day use area, Day 2: Hwy 22 and connectors to the Gap, including Chapel Rock Rd., Wildcat Ranch Rd., Willow Valley Rd.

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 5 to 20°C

Wind speed: light; Wind direction: NNE

Precipitation: thunderstorm with heavy rain mid-afternoon – during lunch break – no rain during count times

Day 2: Temp. 6 to 20°C

Wind speed: light; Wind direction: NNE

Precipitation: none

Comments: pleasant weather both days

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 394 km; by vehicle 365; on foot 29 km.

Total Team Hours: 52 hr; by vehicle 39.5 hr; on foot 12.5 hr.

**Number of Species:** 132 (+7 CW)

**Number of Birds:** 3,630 (+7 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** Downy Woodpecker, Long-billed Curlew, Red-breasted Merganser, House Finch, Wild Turkey, Eared Grebe, Varied Thrush **Mammals:** 1 jackrabbit, 12 mule deer, 55+ Columbian ground squirrels, 2 muskrats, 8 elk, 8 white-tailed deer, 2 coyotes, 7 river otters, 5+ red squirrels, 1 moose with 2 calves, 1 beaver, 6 mountain goats, 2 bighorn sheep, 1 yellow-bellied marmot, 14 Richardson ground squirrels **Other:** tree frog, boreal chorus frogs, boreal toadlet, swallowtail butterflies, mourning cloak butterflies

**Highlights:** Loggerhead Shrike, posing on a wire; Le Conte's sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, Turkey Vulture, Upland Sandpiper; Mountain Goats. "The River Otters were a highlight. We first observed one otter swimming down, then up the stretch of river alongside the Lundbreck Falls campground. Then four appeared, swimming downriver, all in one group as if they were synchronized swimmers. Awesome!" (Teresa Dolman). Another count participant noted that a grouse she flushed "nearly gave me a heart attack."

## **Lac La Biche**

**Date:** 2016

**Compiler:** Jennifer Okrainec

**Participants:** Muriel and Jennifer Mueller, Bob and Mary Dunn, Clara McArthur and Mary Teslin, Dave and Kathy Lawson, Bernie Gauthier, Jennifer, Cooper and Jacob Okrainec

**Area Covered:** Lac La Biche to Owl River, south to Kikino, West to Plamondon, East to Lakeland Provincial Park

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 11 to 16°C



Wind speed: 6 to 12 km/hr. Wind direction: S  
Precipitation: light  
Comments: overcast

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 620 km; by vehicle 610 km; on foot 10 km.  
Total Team Hours: 97 hr; by vehicle 93hr; on foot 4 hr.

**Number of Species:** 121

**Number of Birds:** 5941

**Highlights:** Gray Catbird and lots of meadowlarks

**Lethbridge**

**Date:** May 28 & 29, 2016

**Compiler:** Teresa Dolman

**Participants:** Daniel Arndt, Linda Cerney, D. Cowan, K. Cowan, Douglas Dolman, Teresa Dolman, Graeme Greenlee, Pat Greenlee, Dawn Hall, Jennifer Mather, Mira Vanhala

**Area Covered:** Lethbridge and 50 km radius

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 9 to 18°C

Wind speed: 9 to 43 km/hr. Wind direction: W

Precipitation: 0 mm

Day 2: Temp. 12 to 21°C

Wind speed: 26 to 50 km/hr. Wind direction: W

Precipitation: 0 mm

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 102 km; by vehicle 61 km; on foot 41 km

Total Team Hours: 34 hr; by vehicle 7 hr; on foot 27 hr.

**Number of Species:** 123 (+4 CW)

**Number of Birds:** 5645 (+4 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** Virginia Rail, Solitary Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope

**Highlights:** Two new species were added to the count list, a single Ross's Goose was found at Keho Lake (north of Lethbridge) and a single Pileated Woodpecker was found in Cottonwood Park (within the City of Lethbridge). For the third time only, Trumpeter Swan and Bobolink were reported.

**Medicine Hat**

**Date:** May 29, 2016

**Compiler:** Marty Drut

**Participants:** 41 – Barry Anderson, Judy Anderson, Dee Armstrong, Hugh Armstrong, Monica Bartha, Lisa Bey, Andre Brazeau, Geno Carlson, Taylor Dell, Marty Drut, Calvin Eddy, Mackenzie Fai, Fay Felesky, Val Felesky, Bob Frew, Lauren Hider, Annalora Horch, Phil Horch, Jim Knelson, Cam Lockerbie, Gary Martin, Janet Martin, Valerie Martins, Dave McKenzie, Bill Piggott, Betty Rainville, Jo-Anne Reynolds, Dan Schiebelbein, Mark Schiebelbein, Lorrie Sielski, John Slater, Elaine Spitzer, Milt Spitzer, Charmaine Trottier, Angela Turner, Cailey Turner, Ian Turner, Ben Velner, Michael Velner, Morganne Wall, Rob Wapple

**Area Covered:** Medicine Hat and surrounding

**Weather:** Temp. 6 to 22°C

Wind speed: 13 to 31km/hr. Wind direction: S-SW

Precipitation: None

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 676.3 km; by vehicle 509.5; on foot 166.8 km.

Total Team Hours: 105 hr; by vehicle 38 hr; on foot 64 hr.

**Number of Species:** 130

**Number of Birds:** 9,977

**Other species seen during count week:** Dusky Flycatcher

**Highlights:** The 32<sup>nd</sup> Spring Count was blessed with good weather – temperatures were seasonal (high 22° C, low 6° C) and winds were moderate (13-31 km/hr). With these excellent conditions, 130 species were observed, which was up from 2015 and fairly typical for our count. Individual birds counted (9,977) were also up from last year and well above the average of 7,655 for 2011-2013 (see Data Summary Table, page 2).

This year, there were 6 species with record high counts (see Table 1, page 2). They ranged across the taxonomic board from waterfowl to blackbirds and included Red-breasted Merganser, Rough-legged Hawk, Eurasian Collared-dove, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, and Common Grackle. One species, Marbled Godwit, experienced a record low in 2016; they have been observed in all count years. No new species were observed in 2016. One observation of a Gyrfalcon is noted here in the text but not included in the species table, as it could not be confirmed through a photograph or an independent observation. A gyrfalcon has never been observed during our spring count and could be confused with similar species such as a prairie falcon.

Species missing from this year's count that are usually seen included Western Grebe, Wood Duck, Osprey, Broad-winged Hawk, Golden Eagle, Solitary Sandpiper, Upland Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Redstart, Wilson's Warbler, Baird's Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

Less frequently seen species noted in 2016 were Eurasian Wigeon (2), Bufflehead (1), Red-breasted Merganser (2), Sharp-shinned Hawk (2), Rough-legged Hawk (2), Common Tern (5), Caspian Tern (1), Alder Flycatcher (2), White-breasted Nuthatch (2), Marsh Wren (1), Brewer's Sparrow (1), and Evening Grosbeak (1) (see Species Data Table, page 5). Alder Flycatchers and Evening Grosbeaks have not been observed on the count since 2001 and 1997, respectively.

The top 10 for 2016 were European Starling (1,138), American Robin (826), Canada Goose (594), Rock Pigeon (568), House Sparrow (531), Common Grackle (480), Western Meadowlark (473), Red-winged Blackbird (445), Black-billed Magpie (377), and Brewer's Blackbird (346). Note that 4 of the top 10 are in the blackbird family.

As for flowers, 75 species were observed in bloom, which was relatively high compared to the previous 4 years (see Data Summary Table, page 2 and Flower List, page 3).

Count effort was excellent in 2016. Participants (41) and observation hours (105) were up from last year and the past 3 years have shown a marked improvement in both

areas from previous years (see Data Summary Table, page 2). Many thanks to all those who volunteered their time this year!

New Species Observed in 2016: None

Table 1. 2016 Spring Bird Count All Time High and Low Observations.

<b>2016 Spring Bird Count – Highs and Lows</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Previous High</b>	<b>Year</b>
Red-breasted Merganser	2	2	2008, 2006, 1996
Rough-legged Hawk	2	2	2008
Eurasian Collared-dove	80	59	2014
Blue Jay	33	26	2013
Black-capped Chickadee	109	88	2014
Common Grackle	480	417	2015
<b>Species</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Previous Low</b>	<b>Year</b>
Marbled Godwit	5	6	2012

<b>DATA SUMMARY 2012 - 2016</b>					
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Total Individuals	9,977	9,152	10,114	7,426	7,740
Total Bird Species	130	126	144	130	113
Total Flower Species	75	66	60	51	65
Participants	41	38	37	32	26
Total Km Walked	166.8	123.5	139	100.5	69.5
Total Km Driven	509.5	434	272	199	415
Hours of Observation	105	99	99.5	71.25	69.75
on foot:	64	52	70	59.25	32.25
by car:	38	37	29.5	22	37.5
feeder:	3	10	2	0	5

**Milk River 2015 no information submitted beyond the spreadsheet**

**Taber-Vauxhall**

**Date:** May 28 & 29, 2016

**Compiler:** Lloyd Bennett

**Participants:** Lloyd Bennett, Mary Bennett, Yolanda Bennett, Ron Levagood, Ben Tams, Carol Tams

**Area Covered:** Taber and Vauxhall areas, Purple Springs Dunes

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 6 to 18°C

    Wind speed: 7 to 30 km/hr. Wind direction: W

    Precipitation: 0 mm

Day 2: Temp. 13 to 22°C

    Wind speed: 10 to 30 km/hr. Wind direction: W

    Precipitation: 2 mm

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 473.5 km; by vehicle 466 km; on foot 7.5 km.

Total Team Hours: 30.5 hr; by vehicle 23 hr; on foot 7.5 hr; watching feeders 0

**Number of Species:** 117 (+ 5 CW)

**Number of Birds:** 10,303 (+ 5 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** Trumpeter Swan, Prairie Falcon, Common Nighthawk, Common Raven, White-throated Sparrow

**Highlights:** This year the count fell short of its long-term average of 126 species. However, three gull species (Franklin's Gull, Ring-billed Gull and California Gull) and White-faced Ibis set record highs for numbers of birds. Clark's Grebe was seen for only the third time and White-faced Ibis for only the fourth time. A further highlight was a mammal species – eight elk were seen.

**Wakomao Lake**

**Date:** May 28, 2016

**Compiler:** Jim Lange

**Participants:** Jim Lange

**Area Covered:** no info available

**Weather:**

Temp. 8°C

Wind speed: 15-20km/h

Wind direction: W

Comments: mix of sun/cloud

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 97 km.

Total Team Hours: 9 hr.

**Number of Species:** 57

**Number of Birds:** 593

**Highlights:** The effects of the drought conditions of 2015 along with the lack of snow this past winter was very evident in the area east of Clyde. Lake levels were very low compared to past years, temporary melt water ponds were non-existent & agricultural fields had been cultivated & seeded to crop. This meant no habitat for shorebirds & ducks. Meadowlark numbers were up a bit, Swainson's Hawk was not located, Turkey Vultures were not located - some of this may be due to the dirt/sandy road that leads up from Hwy18 to the top of a high sandy knoll was too wet from overnight rain to drive until late in the PM. This is my favorite spot to sit & have lunch while watching for Vultures as it has such a commanding view. Sandhill Cranes were also missed & Great Blue Heron were in low numbers despite a nest colony in the area.

The most interesting observation came just as I was about to leave from the top of the hill late in the PM. I sighted a Northern Goshawk starting to climb in a thermal below me closer to the highway. The bird continued to soar in a tight spiral as I watched with 10X binoculars until it was just a small Kestrel sized spot. Unfortunately due to the height it was reaching I had to shift my body position to be able to continue to follow it & I lost sight of the bird & unfortunately could not locate the small speck again. Over the years I have watched numerous Goshawks soaring over the Athabasca River valley at Misty Ridge but not the way this fellow did. He was obviously going places. I just don't

know where!

**Waterton Lakes National Park**

**Date:** June 4 & 5, 2016

**Compiler:** Teresa Dolman

**Participants:** Lloyd Bennett, Yolanda Bennett, Linda Cerney, Douglas Dolman, Teresa Dolman, Gerry Fox, James Fox, Dawn Hall, Simon Horton, Candace Jung, Pat Lucas, Dianne Pachal, Elaine Piepgrass, Bert Piepgrass, Lily Simon, Cyndi Smith, Shelia Smith

**Area Covered:** Within Waterton Lakes National Park

**Weather:** Day 1: Temp. 12 to 27°C

Wind speed: 16 to 22 km/hr. Wind direction: SW

Precipitation: 0 mm

Day 2: Temp. 12 to 23°C

Wind speed: 4 to 16 km/hr. Wind direction: NNE

Precipitation: 0 mm

**Team Distance/Hours:**

Total Team Mileage: 245 km; by vehicle 175 km; on foot 70 km.

Total Team Hours: 60 hr; by vehicle 14.5 hr; on foot 45.5 hr.

**Number of Species:** 118 (+ 5 CW)

**Number of Birds:** 2973 (+ 5 CW)

**Other species seen during count week:** Golden Eagle, Calliope Hummingbird, Rufous Hummingbird, Blue Jay, White-throated Sparrow

**Highlights:** Seventeen participants drove all the roads (except for the Akamina Parkway which was closed for construction purposes) and hiked a good many of the trails within the Park. 2016 marks the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of the spring bird count and over that period the average number of species is 106. This year 120 species were reported, along with another five during count week. No species were added to the overall list, but after an absence of more than 10 years, Horned Grebe, Merlin, Philadelphia Vireo and swifts were reported. Bullock's Oriole and Philadelphia Vireo were seen for only the fourth time and Dusky Grouse for only the fifth time. On count days two species were missed for the first time ever – Rufous Hummingbird and Gray Jay! Two birds uncommon for the Park, Blue Jay and White-throated Sparrow, were reported during count week.