



Medicine Hat Interpretive Program

Managed by Grasslands Naturalists

June 27, 2014

2014 SPRING BIRD AND FLOWER COUNT

Fellow Birders and Flower Watchers:

The 30th Spring Count was blessed with good weather – temperatures were seasonal (high 22° C, low 11° C) and winds were light (5-15 km/hr). With these excellent conditions, 144 species were observed, which was the second highest total in count history (154 in 2002). Individual birds counted (10,114) were the greatest since 2010 (13,123) and well above the average of 7,655 for 2011-2013 (see Data Summary Table, page 2).

One new species, palm warbler, was observed in 2014. There were 10 species with record high counts (see Table 1, page 2) as well. Species included 3 water birds (horned grebe, green-winged teal, and cinnamon teal) and 3 sparrows (chipping, savannah, and song). Eurasian-collared doves were high for the third time in four years. No record lows were noted in 2014.

Species missing from this year's count that are usually seen included pied-billed grebe, western grebe, double-crested cormorant, bufflehead, sharp-shinned hawk, eastern phoebe, loggerhead shrike, chestnut-collared longspur, and pine siskin.

Less frequently seen species noted in 2014 were Eurasian wigeon (1), ring-necked duck (4), upland sandpiper (1), black tern (1), ruby-throated hummingbird (1), yellow-bellied sapsucker (1), willow flycatcher (1), white-breasted nuthatch (2), brown creeper (3 – record high), mountain bluebird (2), Townsend's solitaire (1), gray-cheeked thrush (2), hermit thrush (3), northern shrike (1), Wilson's warbler (1), Canada warbler (1), American tree sparrow (9), bobolink (1), and common redpoll (1) (see Species Data Table, page 5).

The top five for 2014 were European starling (1,146), American robin (762), Canada goose (668), house sparrow (558), red-winged blackbird (479).

Two species were seen during count week but not on count day: sandhill crane and western tanager.

As for flowers, 60 species were observed in bloom, which was relatively high compared to the previous 4 years (except 2012) and somewhat surprising because spring "green-up" seemed "delayed" in 2014 (see Data Summary Table, page 2 and Flower List, page 3).

Count effort was excellent in 2014. Participants (36) were the highest since 2010 (35) and hours of observation were higher than any of the previous 4 years (see Data Summary Table, page 2). Many thanks to all those who volunteered their time this year!

Yours truly,

Marty

Marty Drut
Count Compiler

New Species Observed in 2014: Palm Warbler

Table 1. 2014 Spring Bird Count All Time High and Low Observations.

2014 Spring Bird Count - Highs and Lows			
Species	High	Previous High	Year
Horned Grebe	31	20	1997
Green-winged Teal	13	11	2010
Cinnamon Teal	10	10	2011
Ringed-neck Pheasant	130	92	2008
Eurasian-collared Dove	59	23	2013
Black-capped Chickadee	88	72	2011
Brown Creeper	3	2	2006
Chipping Sparrow	325	309	2008
Savannah Sparrow	85	73	2013
Song Sparrow	26	23	2000
No Lows in 2014			

DATA SUMMARY 2010 - 2014					
	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Total Individuals	10,114	7,426	7,740	7,801	13,123
Total Bird Species	144	130	113	126	139
Total Flower Species	60	51	65	46	53
Participants	36	32	26	32	35
Total Km Walked	139	100.5	69.5	71	86
Total Km Driven	272	199	415	215	294.5
Hours of Observation	99.5	71.25	69.75	62.75	86
on foot:	70	59.25	32.25	39.25	52.5
by car:	29.5	22	37.5	23.5	33.5
feeder:	2	0	5	6	4

Wildflowers in Bloom (60 species):

- Prairie Onion (*Allium textile*)
- Star-flowered Solomon's-seal
(*Maianthemum stellatum*)
- Willow (*Salix sp.*)
- Pale Comandra (Bastard Toadflax)
(*Comandra umbellata*)
- Yellow Umbrella-plant (*Eriogonum flavum*)
- Field Chickweed (*Cerastium arvense*)
- Mouse-eared Chickweed
(*Cerastium vulgatum*)
- Wild Mustard (*Brassica kaber*)
- Shepherd's Purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*)
- Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)
- Sand Bladderpod (Yellow Cress)
(*Lesquerella arenosa*)
- Pennycress (Stinkweed) (*Thlaspi arvense*)
- Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*)
- Saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)
- Three-flowered Avens (*Geum triflorum*)
- Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
- Two-grooved Milk Vetch
(*Astragalus bisulcatus*)
- Purple Milk Vetch (*Astragalus dasyglottis*)
- Cushion Milk Vetch (*Astragalus gilviflorus*)
- Missouri Milk Vetch
(*Astragalus missouriensis*)
- Narrow-leaved Milk Vetch
(*Astragalus pectinatus*)
- Common Caragana (*Caragana arborescens*)
- Silvery Perennial Lupine (*Lupinus sericeus*)
- White Sweet Clover (*Melilotus alba*)
- Yellow Sweet Clover (*Melilotus officinalis*)
- Early Yellow Locoweed (*Oxytropis sericea*)
- Golden Bean (*Thermopsis rhombifolia*)
- Wild Vetch (*Vicia Americana*)
- Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)
- Skunk-bush (Fragrant Sumac)
(*Rhus trilobata*)
- Early Blue Violet (*Viola adunca*)
- Yellow (Nuttall's) Prairie Violet
(*Viola nuttallii*)
- Pincushion Cactus (*Corypantha vivipara*)
- Prickly-pear Cactus (*Opuntia polyacantha*)
- Silverberry (Wolf Willow)
(*Elaeagnus commutata*)
- Hairy-fruited Wild (Prairie) Parsley
(*Lomatium foeniculaceum*)
- Red-osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)
- Moss Phlox (*Phlox hoodii*)

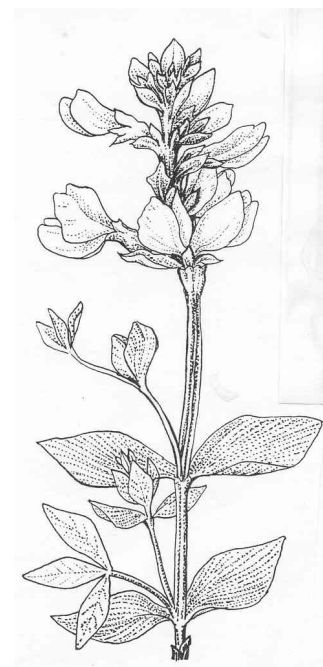
- Narrow-leaved Puccoon
(*Lithospermum incisum*)
- Smooth Blue Beard-tongue
(*Penstemon nitidus*)
- Tartarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*)
- Common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)
- Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Low Everlasting (Pussy-toes)
(*Antennaria aprica*)
- Tufted (Low) Fleabane (*Erigeron caespitosus*)
- Colorado Rubberplant
(*Hymenoxys richardsonii*)
- Common Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*)
- Common Dandelion
(*Taraxacum officinale*)
- Yellow Goat's-beard (*Tragopogon dubious*)

Others observed (not in taxonomic order):

- Pygmy Flower (Fairy Candelabra)
(*Androsace septentrionalis*)
- Ball Mustard (*Neslia paniculata*)
- Flixweed (*Descurainia sophia*)
- Common Peppergrass
(*Lepidium densiflorum*)
- Prairie Cinquefoil (*Potentilla pensylvanica*)
- Marsh Ragwort (*Senecio congestus*)
- Reflexed Rock Cress (*Arabis holboellii*)
- Thread-leaved Sedge (*Carex filifolia*)
- Alsike Clover (*Trifolium hybridum*)
- Apple (*Pyrus malus*)
- Prickly Rose (*Rosa acicularis*)

PARTICIPANTS:

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Species	May 25 2014	May 26 2013	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010
Pied-billed Grebe	-	-	-	1	1
Horned Grebe	31 <i>high</i>	-	1	2	5
Eared Grebe	11	-	2	46	6
Western Grebe	-	1	3	-	2
White Pelican	17	58	66	79	110
Double-crested Cormorant	-	8	-	-	12
Great Blue Heron	110	47	40	22	108
Canada Goose	668	615	313	543	930 <i>high</i>
Wood Duck	3	2	7	2	2
Green-winged Teal	13 <i>high</i>	-	10	8	11 <i>high</i>
Mallard	284	248	303	238	457 <i>high</i>
Northern Pintail	36	16	42	49	93
Blue-winged Teal	191	27	105	62	148
Cinnamon Teal	10 <i>high</i>	4	6	10 <i>high</i>	9
Northern Shoveler	177	37	85	144	154
Gadwall	26	42	18	35	97
Eurasian Wigeon	1	-	-	-	1
American Wigeon	8	35	11	26	54 <i>high</i>
Canvasback	29	9	47	26	26
Redhead	13	7	3	13	11
Ring-necked Duck	4	-	-	4	-
Lesser Scaup	15	24	27	9	68
Greater Scaup	-	2	-	-	5
Common Goldeneye	4	10	12	2	20
Bufflehead	-	2	12	-	5
Hooded Merganser	2	-	-	-	-
Common Merganser	8	18	12	4 <i>low</i>	24
Ruddy Duck	6	-	-	5	1
Turkey Vulture	13	12	1	5	23 <i>high</i>
Osprey	2	-	1	-	-
Northern Harrier	2	1	3	6	3
Bald Eagle	3	6	1	5	5
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	-	-	2	1
Cooper's Hawk	2	-	1	2	2
Broad-winged Hawk	-	-	-	-	1
Swainson's Hawk	28	20	16	13	27
Red-tailed Hawk	15	11	7	7	8
Ferruginous Hawk	1	2	1	1	-
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	1	-	-
Golden Eagle	-	-	2	-	-
American Kestrel	8	9	5 <i>low</i>	11	13
Merlin	7	4	4	5	10
Prairie Falcon	5	7 <i>high</i>	1	1	6 <i>high</i>
Gray Partridge	30	14	8	2	8

Species	May 25 2014	May 26 2013	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010
Ring-necked Pheasant	130 high	77	55	35	62
Sharp-tailed Grouse	3	2	-	3	-
Yellow Rail	-	-	-	1 NEW!	-
Virginia Rail	-	-	-	1	-
Sora	2	1	3	4	5
American Coot	24	4 low	9	34	20
Sandhill Crane	CW	-	-	-	-
Killdeer	31	16 low	39	26 low	27
Black-necked Stilt	-	-	-	-	1
American Avocet	15	2	4	5	24
Solitary Sandpiper	12	-	-	4	1
Willet	7	16	2 low	4	11
Spotted Sandpiper	19	20	28	5 low	35
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1	28 high	-	-	-
Upland Sandpiper	1	-	-	-	-
Long-billed Curlew	9	3	8	3	16
Marbled Godwit	10	36	6 low	16	68 high
Baird's Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	1 NEW!
"Peeps" Species	2	-	-	15	-
Wilson's Snipe	17	8	22	17	10
Wilson's Phalarope	49	10	57 high	8	35
Red-necked Phalarope	-	-	-	-	2 NEW!
Franklin's Gull	92	44	200	9	1,006 high
Ring-billed Gull	101	174	842	88	862
California Gull	19	44	164	15	158
Herring Gull	-	4	-	-	-
"White-headed Gulls"	1	10	12	3	16
Common Tern	1	-	10	-	3
Caspian Tern	1	2	-	1	-
Black Tern	1	-	-	-	2
Rock Pigeon	289	219	486	233	488
Mourning Dove	275	214	109	97	156
Eurasian-collared Dove	59 high	23 high	7	13 high	11
Black-billed Cuckoo	-	-	-	-	CW
Great Horned Owl	7	5	3	3	4
Short-eared Owl	-	-	-	1	-
Common Nighthawk	-	-	-	-	1
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1	-	-	-	-
Belted Kingfisher	4	3	6	1	4
Pileated Woodpecker	2	1	3 high	1	2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	-	-	-	-
Sapsucker Species	-	-	-	-	1
Downy Woodpecker	26	14	12	30 high	16
Hairy Woodpecker	3	2	3	3	4

Species	May 25 2014	May 26 2013	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010
Northern Flicker	62	85 <i>high</i>	33	47	82
Red-headed Woodpecker	-	-	CW	-	-
Western Wood Pewee	7	5	2	-	3
“Trail’s Flycatcher” = (Alder & Willow Flycatcher)	-	-	-	-	-
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	2
Willow Flycatcher	1	-	-	-	-
Least Flycatcher	74	40	44	139 <i>high</i>	89
Empidonax Species	-	-	-	1	18
Eastern Phoebe	-	1	-	-	1
Say’s Phoebe	3	1	2	-	2
Western Kingbird	77	58	55	11	75
Eastern Kingbird	72	73	24	28	125
Horned Lark	17	13	1 <i>low</i>	26	44
Tree Swallow	156	113	80	82	173
Violet-green Swallow	25	17	28	13	61 <i>high</i>
N. Roughed-winged Swallow	11	20	4	8	6
Bank Swallow	30	25	97	46	57
Cliff Swallow	10	33	3 <i>low</i>	105	215
Barn Swallow	75	26	43	94	39
Swallow Species	2	-	10	-	-
Blue Jay	21	26 <i>high</i>	6	7	11
Black-billed Magpie	246	243	148	89 <i>low</i>	236
American Crow	89	87	71	68	69
Common Raven	2	2	-	-	9 <i>high</i>
Black-capped Chickadee	88 <i>high</i>	32	39	72 <i>high</i>	71
Red-breasted Nuthatch	9	18	13	14	22
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	-	-	-	3
Brown Creeper	3 <i>high</i>	-	-	-	-
Rock Wren	16	13	4	9	31 <i>high</i>
House Wren	187	180	102	195	136
Marsh Wren	-	1	-	2	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	-	-	1	-
Mountain Bluebird	2	-	-	-	-
Townsend’s Solitaire	1	1	-	-	-
Veery	5	4	-	3	2
Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	2	-	-	-
Swainson’s Thrush	51	18	4	18	19
Hermit Thrush	3	-	-	-	11
American Robin	762	555	628	732	918 <i>high</i>
Gray Catbird	61	19	23	49	81
Brown Thrasher	37	26	6 <i>low</i>	19	29
Sprague’s Pipit	5	4	1	7	10
Cedar Waxwing	26	36	10	4	26

Species	May 25 2014	May 26 2013	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010
Loggerhead Shrike	-	-	3	-	1
Northern Shrike	1	-	-	-	-
European Starling	1,146	793	562	1,048	1,171
Warbling Vireo	26	31	20	7	9
Red-eyed Vireo	7	14 <i>high</i>	-	2	8 <i>high</i>
Orange-crowned Warbler	6	-	-	7	6
Tennessee Warbler	11	2	-	11	7
Yellow Warbler	439	327	215	417	270
Magnolia Warbler	-	-	CW	-	-
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	4	-	2	1
Palm Warbler	1 NEW!	-	-	-	-
Blackpoll Warbler	4	-	-	7	1
Ovenbird	1	2	-	3	-
American Redstart	5	-	2	-	5
MacGillivray's Warbler	-	-	3	-	-
Common Yellowthroat	25	8	7 <i>low</i>	9	13
Wilson's Warbler	1	-	-	-	1
Canada Warbler	1	-	-	-	-
Yellow-breasted Chat	4	1	1	3	2
Warbler Species	-	-	-	4	-
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	1	-	2	3
Black-headed Grosbeak	-	-	-	1 <i>high</i>	-
Lazuli Bunting	10	1	2	1	5
Western Tanager	CW	1	-	-	-
Spotted Towhee	25	12	18	15	32
American Tree Sparrow	9	-	-	1	-
Chipping Sparrow	325 <i>high</i>	165	15	149	151
Clay-coloured Sparrow	122	87	23	107	83
Brewer's Sparrow	-	-	-	-	3
Vesper Sparrow	87	74	55	22	58
Lark Sparrow	20	24	13	15	35
Lark Bunting	9	4	7	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	85 <i>high</i>	73 <i>high</i>	20	53	24
Baird's Sparrow	6	1	-	1	2
Grasshopper Sparrow	1	2	-	-	-
Song Sparrow	26 <i>high</i>	16	2	2	9
White-throated Sparrow	-	9	-	1	1
White-crowned Sparrow	16	3	-	7	1
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	2	-	-	-
Harris's Sparrow	-	4	-	-	-
Sparrow Species	-	-	40	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	2	2	-	-	-
Chestnut-collared Longspur	-	3	-	2	3
Bobolink	1	-	-	-	1

Species	May 25 2014	May 26 2013	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010
Red-winged Blackbird	479	438	505	378	648
Western Meadowlark	408	184	257	217	219
Yellow-headed Blackbird	69	56	55	111	160
Brewer's Blackbird	305	159	335	252	409
Common Grackle	273	214	310	344	337
Brown-headed Cowbird	130	49	80	128	146
Baltimore Oriole	58	34	35	35	61
Red Crossbill	-	20 <i>high</i>	1	-	-
Common Redpoll	1	3	-	-	-
Pine Siskin	-	13	1	-	10
American Goldfinch	42	26	45	98	83
House Finch	128	74	53	61	91
Purple Finch	-	1	-	5 <i>high</i>	-
House Sparrow	558	432	307	312	856
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	10,114	7,453	7,740	7,801	13,123
TOTAL SPECIES	144	130	113	126	139