

**MEDICINE HAT  
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM**  
Managed by Grasslands Naturalists



June 29, 2012

**2012 SPRING BIRD AND FLOWER COUNT**

Fellow Birders and Flower Watchers:

The main highlight for 2012 was the weather; the count day high was 6° C, there was about 20 mm of rain throughout the day, and the wind blew steadily (up to 30 km/hr) from the E-NE, making for a challenging day. Despite the poor conditions, 113 species were observed, which is only about 15% lower than the average for the past 4 years. As might be expected, numbers of individual birds were low relative to 2008-2010 counts. No new species were observed.

Some species missing from this year's count that are usually observed were double-crested cormorant, sharp-tailed grouse, veery, orange-crowned warbler, blackpoll warbler, rose-breasted grosbeak, and Baird's sparrow.

Less frequently seen species observed in 2012 and not in 2011 included golden eagle (2), MacGillivray's warbler (3), red crossbill (1), and pine siskin (1).

There were only 2 species with recorded high counts in 2012 whereas 7 species had recorded low counts; one species, double-crested cormorant, was not observed for the second year in a row after being observed in all other years (see Table 1 below).

The top five species for 2012 were: ring-billed gull (842), American robin (628), European starling (562), red-winged blackbird (505), and rock dove (486).

A magnolia warbler was seen exclusively during count week.

As for flowers in bloom, there were 65 species observed, which is well above average for the spring count. Likely, the wet spring translated into more wildflowers observed.

The number of participants decreased again from 2011 but hours of observation and distances driven and covered on foot were greater or comparable to last year (see Data Summary Table below). Many thanks to all those who volunteered their time this year!

Yours truly,

*Marty*

Marty Drut  
Count Compiler

**New Species Observed in 2012:** None

Table 1. 2012 Spring Bird Count All Time High and Low Observations.

<b>2012 Spring Bird Count – Highs and Lows</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Previous High</b>	<b>Year</b>
Wilson’s Phalarope	57	50	2004
Pileated Woodpecker	3	2	2010, 2008
<b>Species</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Previous Low</b>	<b>Year</b>
Double-crested Cormorant	0	0	Second consecutive year none observed; 2 or more observed in all previous count years
American Kestrel	5	8	1987
Willet	2	4	2011, 2006
Marbled Godwit	6	7	1997, 1987
Horned Lark	1	11	2007
Cliff Swallow	3	7	2001, 1988
Brown Thrasher	6	10	2004
Common Yellowthroat	7	8	1989

<b>DATA SUMMARY – 2008 to 2012</b>					
	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Total Individuals	7,740	7,801	13,123	10,297	11,170
Total Bird Species	113	126	139	127	142
Total Flower Species	65	46	53	32	33
Participants	26	32	35	25	30
Total Km Walked	69.5	71	86	76	95
Total Km Driven	415	215	294.5	236	293
Hours of Observation	69.75	62.75	86	86.25	95.25
on foot:	32.25	39.25	52.5	50.5	60.25
by car:	37.5	23.5	33.5	35.75	35.0
feeder:	5	6	4	2	2

Any comments or questions:

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## **Wildflowers in bloom: 65 species**

- Prairie Onion (*Allium textile*)  
Willow Species (*Salix sp.*)  
Pale Comandra (Bastard Toadflax)  
(*Comandra umbellata*)  
Yellow Umbrella-plant (*Eriogonum flavum*)  
Wild Mustard (*Brassica kaber*)  
Shepherd's Purse  
(*Capsella bursa-pastoris*)  
Western Wallflower (Prairie Rocket)  
(*Erysimum asperum*)  
Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)  
Sand Bladderpod (*Lesquerella arenosa*)  
Penny Cress (*Thlaspi arvense*)  
Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*)  
Saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)  
Three-flowered Avens (*Geum triflorum*)  
Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)  
Common Wild Rose (*Rosa woodsii*)  
Two-grooved Milk Vetch  
(*Astragalus bisulcatus*)  
Purple Milk Vetch (*Astragalus dasyglottis*)  
Missouri Milk Vetch  
(*Astragalus missouriensis*)  
Narrow-leaved Milk Vetch  
(*Astragalus pectinatus*)  
Common Caragana (*Caragana arborescens*)  
Silvery Perennial Lupine (*Lupinus sericeus*)  
Black Medic (*Medicago lupulina*)  
Yellow Sweet Clover (*Melilotus officinalis*)  
Early Yellow Locoweed (*Oxytropis sericea*)  
Golden Bean (*Thermopsis rhombifolia*)  
Wild Vetch (*Vicia Americana*)  
Wild Blue Flax (*Linum lewisii*)  
Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)  
Skunk-bush (*Rhus trilobata*)  
Early Blue Violet (*Viola adunca*)  
Pincushion Cactus (*Coryphantha 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*)  
Butter and Eggs (Toad-flax)  
(*Linaria vulgaris*)  
White Beard-tongue (*Penstemon albidus*)  
Smooth Blue Beard-tongue  
(*Penstemon nitidus*)  
Tartarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*)  
Common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)  
Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)  
Low Everlasting (Pussy-toes)  
(*Antennaria aprica*)  
Colorado Rubberplant  
(*Hymenoxys richardsonii*)  
Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)  
Yellow Goat's-beard (*Tragopogon dubius*)
- Others observed  
(not in taxonomic order):
- Pygmy Flower (*Androsace septentrionalis*)  
Perennial Sow Thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*)  
Small Seeded False Flax  
(*Camelina microcarpa*)  
Ball Mustard (*Neslia paniculata*)  
Spreading Dogbane  
(*Apocynum androsaemifolium*)  
Silvery Groundsel (*Senecio canus*)  
Flixweed (*Descurainia sophia*)  
Gooseberry (*Ribes oxycanthoides*)  
Tumbling Mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*)  
Pineapple Weed (*Matricaria matricarioides*)  
Wild Tomato (*Solanum triflorum*)  
Yellow Beard-tongue (*Penstemon confertus*)  
Common Peppergrass  
(*Lepidium densiflorum*)  
Lens-podded Hoary Cress  
(*Cardaria chalapensis*)  
Gumweed (*Grindelia squarrosa*)  
Scentless Chamomile (*Matricaria perforata*)  
Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)  
Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

## PARTICIPANTS

Mark Schiebelbein  
Dan Schiebelbein  
Ashley Hart  
Rob Gardner  
Corlaine Gardner  
Michael Velner  
Rick Carrier  
Milt Spitzer  
Gary Martin  
Bob Frew  
Phil Horch  
Annalora Horch  
Michael O'Shea  
Cam Lockerbie  
Jim Knelson  
Mackenzie Fai  
Colton Prins  
Marty Drut  
Jim Marshall  
David Parberry  
Julie Tingley  
Valerie Martins  
Barry Anderson  
Judy Anderson  
John Slater  
Dale Holmes

Feeder Watchers:

Lorraine Marshall  
Calvin Eddy



Species	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010	May 24 2009	May 25 2008
Pied-billed Grebe	-	1	1	-	-
Horned Grebe	1	2	5	-	2
Eared Grebe	2	46	6	15	19
Western Grebe	3	-	2	3	1
White Pelican	66	79	110	144	159 <i>high</i>
Double-crested Cormorant	-	-	12	16	40 <i>high</i>
American Bittern		-	-	-	-
Great Blue Heron	40	22	108	143	50
Black-crowned Night Heron	-	-	-	-	-
White-faced Ibis	-	-	-	-	1
Snow Goose	-	-	-	1	-
Canada Goose	313	543	930 <i>high</i>	596	549
Wood Duck	7	2	2	3	7
Green-winged Teal	10	8	11 <i>high</i>	-	2
Mallard	303	238	457 <i>high</i>	205	226
Northern Pintail	42	49	93	22	27
Blue-winged Teal	105	62	148	81	96
Cinnamon Teal	6	10 <i>high</i>	9	6	-
Northern Shoveler	85	144	154	78	109
Gadwall	18	35	97	176 <i>high</i>	88
Eurasian Wigeon	-	-	1	6 <i>high</i>	-
American Wigeon	11	26	54 <i>high</i>	16	26
Canvasback	47	26	26	20	25
Redhead	3	13	11	18	38 <i>high</i>
Ring-necked Duck	-	4	-	-	1
Lesser Scaup	27	9	68	19	14
Greater Scaup	-	-	5	2	8 <i>high</i>
Common Goldeneye	12	2	20	16	25
Bufflehead	12	-	5	-	1
Hooded Merganser	-	-	-	-	-
Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	-	2
Common Merganser	12	4 <i>low</i>	24	9	22
Ruddy Duck	-	5	1	11	1
Turkey Vulture	1	5	23 <i>high</i>	22	23 <i>high</i>
Osprey	1	-	-	3	5 <i>high</i>
Northern Harrier	3	6	3	12	18
Bald Eagle	1	5	5	7 <i>high</i>	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	2	1	-	-
Cooper's Hawk	1	2	2	1	1
Broad-winged Hawk	-	-	1	1	1
Swainson's Hawk	16	13	27	20	24
Red-tailed Hawk	7	7	8	19 <i>high</i>	17
Ferruginous Hawk	1	1	-	-	1
Rough-legged Hawk	1	-	-	1	2 <i>high</i>

Species	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010	May 24 2009	May 25 2008
Golden Eagle	2	-	-	-	-
American Kestrel	<b>5 low</b>	11	13	14	16
Merlin	4	5	10	7	10
Prairie Falcon	1	1	<b>6 high</b>	4	4
Peregrine Falcon	-	-	-	-	<b>1 NEW!</b>
Gray Partridge	8	2	8	12	13
Ring-necked Pheasant	55	35	62	87	<b>92 high</b>
Sharp-tailed Grouse	-	3	-	-	3
Yellow Rail	-	<b>1 NEW!</b>	-	-	-
Virginia Rail	-	1	-	-	-
Sora	3	4	5	6	13
American Coot	9	34	20	54	<b>66 high</b>
Killdeer	39	<b>26 low</b>	27	<b>26 low</b>	46
Black-necked Stilt	-	-	1	-	-
American Avocet	4	5	24	2	6
Greater Yellowlegs	-	-	-	1	-
Lesser Yellowlegs	-	-	-	3	-
Solitary Sandpiper	-	4	1	-	1
Willet	<b>2 low</b>	4	11	11	22
Spotted Sandpiper	28	<b>5 low</b>	35	31	15
Upland Sandpiper	-	-	-	3	-
Whimbrel	-	-	-	-	<b>5 high</b>
Long-billed Curlew	8	3	16	8	9
Marbled Godwit	<b>6 low</b>	16	<b>68 high</b>	18	32
Baird's Sandpiper	-	-	<b>1 NEW!</b>	-	-
"Peeps" Species	-	15	-	-	-
Wilson's Snipe	22	17	10	15	27
Wilson's Phalarope	<b>57 high</b>	8	35	28	40
Red-necked Phalarope	-	-	<b>2 NEW!</b>	-	-
Franklin's Gull	200	9	1,006 <b>high</b>	213	127
Ring-billed Gull	842	88	862	350	598
California Gull	164	15	158	64	29
"White-headed Gulls"	12	3	16	-	14
Common Tern	10	-	3	16	4
Caspian Tern	-	1	-	-	6
Forster's Tern	-	-	-	-	1
Black Tern	-	-	2	-	5
Rock Pigeon	486	233	488	383	446
Mourning Dove	109	97	156	299	313
Eurasian-collared Dove	7	<b>13 high</b>	11	7	5
Black-billed Cuckoo	-	-	CW	-	-
Great Horned Owl	3	3	4	10	13
Short-eared Owl	-	1	-	-	-
Common Nighthawk	-	-	1	-	-

Species	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010	May 24 2009	May 25 2008
Belted Kingfisher	6	1	4	6	7
Pileated Woodpecker	3 <i>high</i>	1	2	-	2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-	-	-	-	1
Red-naped Sapsucker	-	-	-	-	-
Sapsucker Species	-	-	1	-	-
Downy Woodpecker	12	30 <i>high</i>	16	24	19
Hairy Woodpecker	3	3	4	1	1
Northern Flicker	30	47	82	48	76
Western Wood Pewee	2	-	3	7	1
Olive-sided Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-
“Trail’s Flycatcher” = (Alder & Willow Flycatcher)	-	-	-	-	2
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	-	-	2	-	CW
Willow Flycatcher	-	-	-	1	CW
Least Flycatcher	44	139 <i>high</i>	89	57	41
Empidonax Species	-	1	18	-	-
Eastern Phoebe	-	-	1	1	-
Say’s Phoebe	2	-	2	2	2
Western Kingbird	55	11	75	98	38
Eastern Kingbird	24	28	125	92	31
Horned Lark	1 <i>low</i>	26	44	16	45
Tree Swallow	80	82	173	305 <i>high</i>	204
Violet-green Swallow	28	13	61 <i>high</i>	36	4
N. Roughed-winged Swallow	4	8	6	9	12
Bank Swallow	97	46	57	46	122
Cliff Swallow	3 <i>low</i>	105	215	68	91
Barn Swallow	43	94	39	35	39
Purple Martin	-	-	-	-	-
Swallow Species	10	-	-	-	-
Blue Jay	6	7	11	18 <i>high</i>	9
Black-billed Magpie	148	89 <i>low</i>	236	196	213
American Crow	71	68	69	110	123
Common Raven	-	-	9 <i>high</i>	-	-
Black-capped Chickadee	39	72 <i>high</i>	71	56	60
Red-breasted Nuthatch	13	14	22	22	13
White-breasted Nuthatch	-	-	3	3	-
Rock Wren	4	9	31 <i>high</i>	2	-
House Wren	102	195	136	256	215
Marsh Wren	-	2	2	1	7 <i>high</i>
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	1	-	-	1
Mountain Bluebird	-	-	-	-	-
Veery	-	3	2	-	2
Swainson’s Thrush	4	18	19	23	24

Species	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010	May 24 2009	May 25 2008
Hermit Thrush	-	-	11	-	-
American Robin	628	732	918 <i>high</i>	894	819
Gray Catbird	23	49	81	54	69
Northern Mockingbird	-	-	-	-	1
Brown Thrasher	6 <i>low</i>	19	29	62	67
Sprague's Pipit	1	7	10	10	10
Cedar Waxwing	10	4	26	-	56
Loggerhead Shrike	3	-	1	-	1
Northern Shrike	-	-	-	2	2 <b>NEW!</b>
European Starling	562	1,048	1,171	878	779
Blue-headed Vireo (Solitary)	-	-	-	-	CW
Warbling Vireo	20	7	9	21	9
Red-eyed Vireo	-	2	8 <i>high</i>	-	5
Orange-crowned Warbler	-	7	6	2	10
Tennessee Warbler	-	11	7	3	11
Yellow Warbler	215	417	270	377	290
Magnolia Warbler	CW	-	-	-	-
Yellow-rumped Warbler	-	2	1	6	7
Blackpoll Warbler	-	7	1	17	4
Ovenbird	-	3	-	-	CW
Northern Waterthrush	-	-	-	-	1
Black-and-white Warbler	-	-	-	1	-
American Redstart	2	-	5	1	1
MacGillivray's Warbler	3	-	-	-	-
Common Yellowthroat	7 <i>low</i>	9	13	19	12
Wilson's Warbler	-	-	1	2	CW
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	3	2	1	CW
Warbler Species	-	4	-	-	-
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	-	2	3	1	1
Black-headed Grosbeak	-	1 <i>high</i>	-	-	-
Lazuli Bunting	2	1	5	1	6
Spotted Towhee	18	15	32	61	47
American Tree Sparrow	-	1	-	-	1
Chipping Sparrow	15	149	151	82	309 <i>high</i>
Clay-coloured Sparrow	23	107	83	168 <i>high</i>	145
Brewer's Sparrow	-	-	3	-	-
Vesper Sparrow	55	22	58	117	137 <i>high</i>
Lark Sparrow	13	15	35	80	52
Lark Bunting	7	-	-	1	16
Savannah Sparrow	20	53	24	40	55
Baird's Sparrow	-	1	2	3	3
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	-	-	-	-	5 <b>NEW!</b>
Grasshopper Sparrow	-	-	-	3	-



Species	May 27 2012	May 28 2011	May 30 2010	May 24 2009	May 25 2008
Song Sparrow	2	2	9	15	7
White-throated Sparrow	-	1	1	-	-
White-crowned Sparrow	-	7	1	-	6
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	-	-	1	2
Harris's Sparrow	-	-	-	-	3
Sparrow Species	40	-	-	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	-	-	-	2	2
Chestnut-collared Longspur	-	2	3	-	-
Bobolink	-	-	1	-	-
Red-winged Blackbird	505	378	648	634	878
Western Meadowlark	257	217	219	368	425
Yellow-headed Blackbird	55	111	160	123	357 <i>high</i>
Brewer's Blackbird	335	252	409	268	480
Common Grackle	310	344	337	323	330
Brown-headed Cowbird	80	128	146	178	190
Baltimore Oriole	35	35	61	25	45
Red Crossbill	1	-	-	-	-
Pine Siskin	1	-	10	-	-
American Goldfinch	45	98	83	46	31
House Finch	53	61	91	22	52
Purple Finch	-	5 <i>high</i>	-	-	1
House Sparrow	307	312	856	482	410
<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS</b>	7,740	7,801	13,123	10,297	11,170
<b>TOTAL SPECIES</b>	113	126	139	127	142