



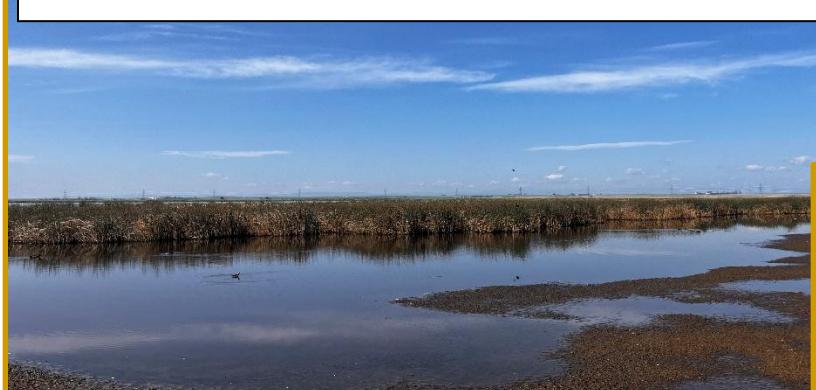
Alberta and Saskatchewan Trip

June 12-18, 2025



The purpose of this trip was to obtain some photos of some birds for a project but also to check out Grassland National Park and other scenic areas Canada's prairie region. On June 11, 2025, my wife and I left Kamloops following a work event at 9:00pm with our trailer and headed east. We drove for two hours to give ourselves a head start for the next day. The first night was ungloriously celebrated at a roadside truck stop in Revelstoke. The next day we left early and were through the mountains and into High River, Alberta by mid afternoon. We checked into our campground and headed out to Frank Lake by 5:00pm Alberta time. Our timing of mid June was perfect for seeing and photographing some key target species.

Clockwise from top right: Eared Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American White Pelican, Richardson's Ground Squirrel, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, White-faced Ibis.



The next morning we were back at Frank Lake and circumnavigated the entire area clockwise, taking a couple of smaller tracks closer to the water. We ended up at the main location (bird blind area on the NW corner of the main lake) and stayed there until roughly 11:00am. We were thankful that the sky was clear of the wildfire smoke that we had encountered briefly the day before.



Clockwise from top left: Black-necked Stilt with young, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Duck, Wilson's Phalarope, Franklin's Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, Forster's Tern, Savannah Sparrow, Western Grebe.



We were on the road around noon for our trip to Chaplin, Saskatchewan. We made an unexpected stop at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. This is an area of significance for the Siksika Nation and there is a quality museum there now. The museum did not allow photos but the area around the museum is pictured below.



Ferruginous Hawk and Mountain Bluebird photographed around the museum grounds above.

We then completed the 4-hour drive to Chaplin, Saskatchewan. Chaplin is a tiny town built around the harvesting of salt from several shallow natural salt pans in the area. This is a main staging area of inland shorebirds in the spring and fall on their way to and from the arctic. Being there in June, we were able to see the species that breed there with photos of Common Tern and flight photos of Ferruginous Hawk being the major targets.

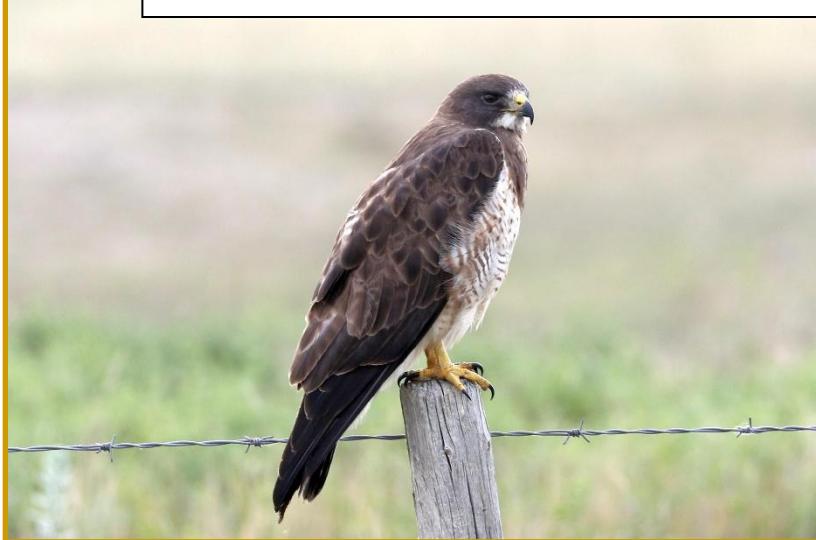




Clockwise from top left: Chestnut-collared Longspur, Common Gackle, Ferruginous Hawk, Common Tern



Clockwise from top left: Grasshopper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, White-tailed Jackrabbit, Western Meadowlark, Swainson's Hawk



After one night in Chaplin, we headed the 2+ hours south to Grasslands National Park. We had pre-booked a camp site for two nights in the West Block at the Frenchman Valley Campground inside the park. This park was new for both of us and we thoroughly enjoyed our time there. We did some hiking, wildlife drives, visited the town of Val Marie, and visited some places that explain the park. Grasslands NP is home to some of Canada's last remaining Black-tailed Prairie Dog towns and truly wild Burrowing Owls. We were also able to see and photograph Plains Bison and Pronghorn Antelope here, although we saw Pronghorn at many places along the road in both Alberta and Saskatchewan on this trip. Overall we were more impressed with the scenery of the park than what we had expected. The photos below show what we were able to see during our two nights there.





Clockwise from top left: Loggerhead Shrike, Bobolink, Gray Partridge, Great Horned Owl, White-tailed Deer, Red-headed Woodpecker,



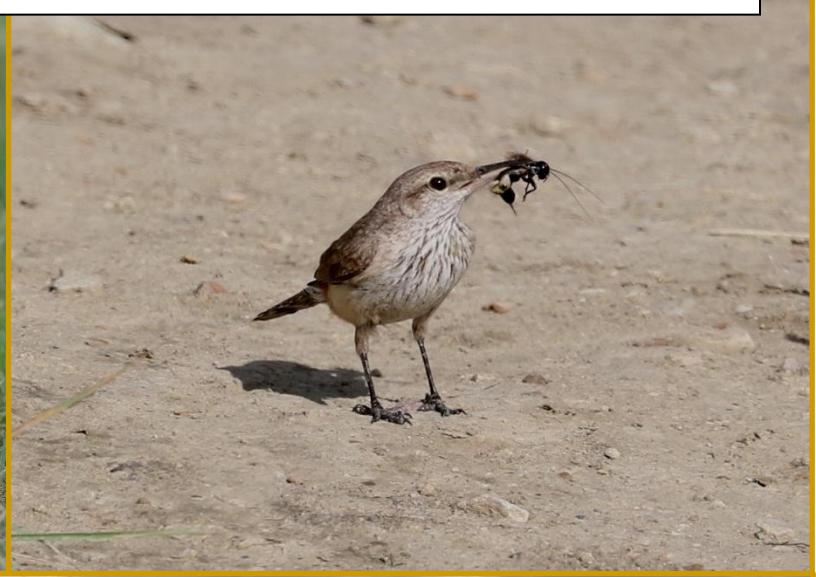


Previous Page: A Mule Deer and Coyote standoff. Some of the cow and calf Bison seen, 3 Coyotes hunting Prairie Dogs or Ground Squirrels.

This page clockwise from top left: American Badger, Plains Bison, Burrowing Owl, Richardson's Ground Squirrel, a roosting Common Nighthawk, Black-tailed Prairie Dogs.



Clockwise from top left: Horned Lark, Lark Bunting, Pronghorn, Rock Wren, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Long-billed Curlew

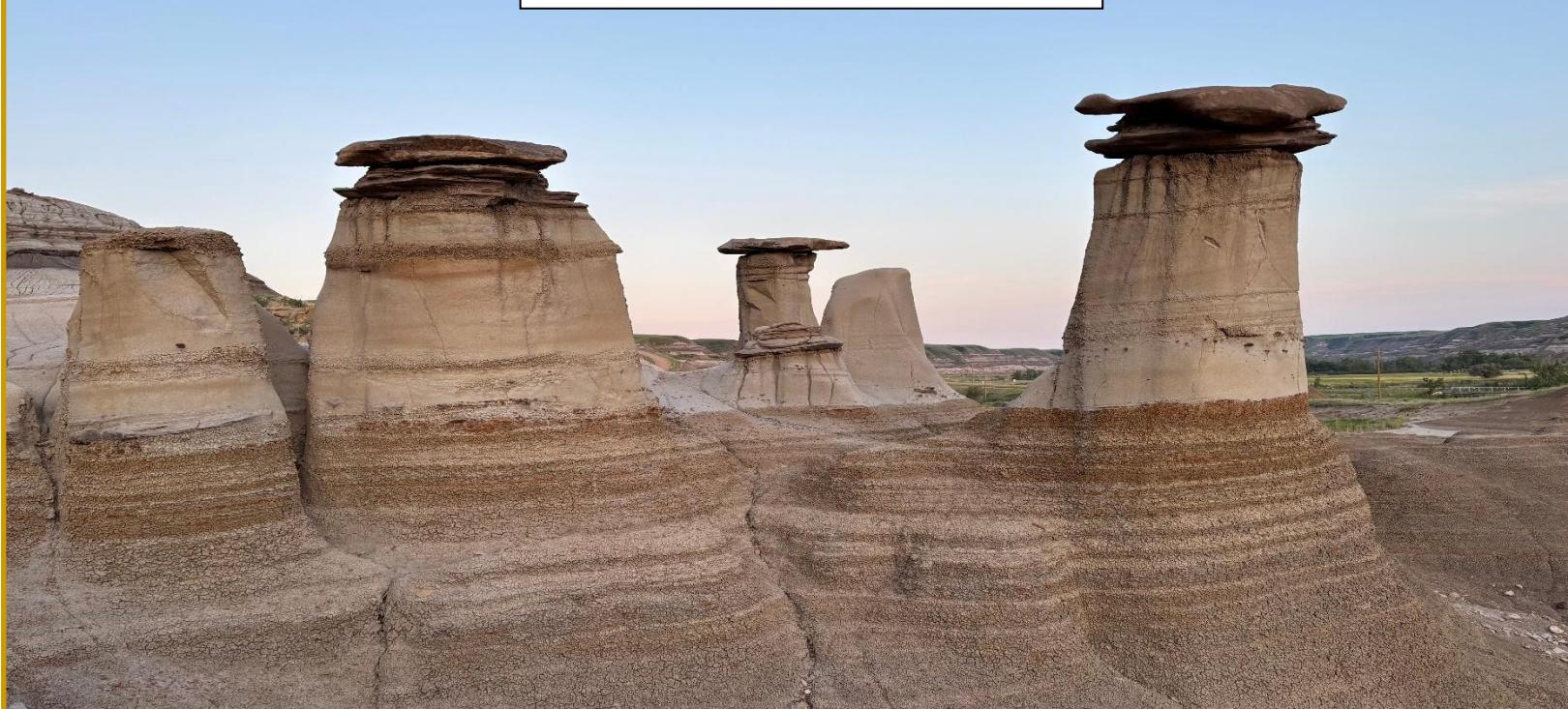


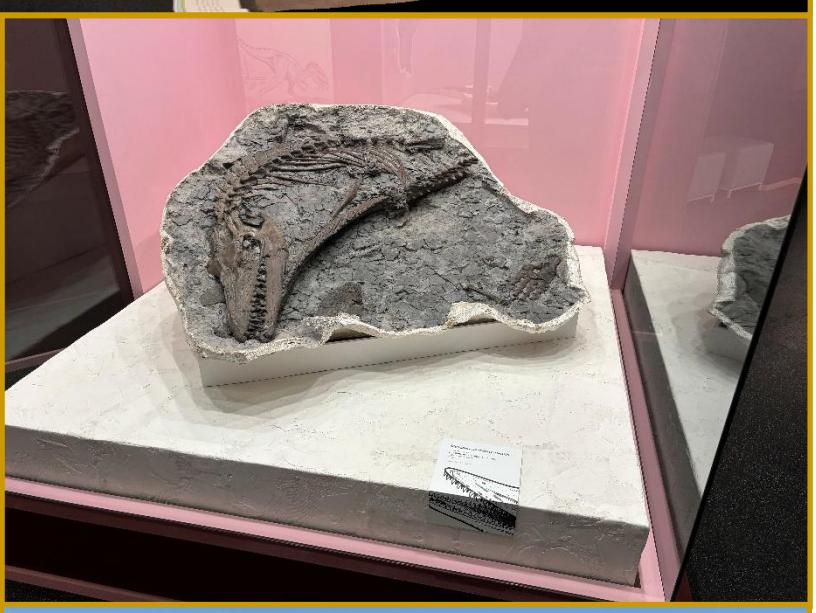


Clockwise from top: Plains Bison, Black-tailed Prairie Dog, Chestnut-collared Longspur, some type of Fritillary Butterfly.



On the way back home, we stopped for a night at Drumheller, Alberta. This is a place famous for the dinosaur remains found in the vicinity. There is a fantastic museum there that highlights this that we stopped at for several hours. We also enjoyed the Hoodoo area there at sunset and a short hike through Horseshoe Canyon. Some roadside Pronghorn between Swift Current and Drumheller below as well.





Horseshoe Canyon Drumheller, Alberta

After camping one night in Drumheller, we headed west towards Kamloops. A highlight was passing the motorcades containing the leaders of the G7 where meetings had concluded that day in Kananaskis. We spent the last night in Revelstoke, BC. We were hoping to go up the Meadows in the Sky Parkway in Mt. Revelstoke National Park but it was only open a short ways due to snow still hanging around at the top. Will have to do that on another trip 😊.

Itinerary of the Trip:

Day 1: Kamloops to Revelstoke late at night to get a head start. Slept at truck stop in Revelstoke

Day 2: Revelstoke to High River, Alberta. Slept at George Lane Memorial Campground, 5-10 minutes from Frank Lake area.

Day 3: Drove to Chaplin, Saskatchewan. Stopped at Blackfoot crossing Historical Park and museum (highly recommended). Slept at Chaplin Village Campground, right across the highway from the main birding areas there.

Day 4: Drove from Chaplin to Grassland National Park, Saskatchewan. Slept at Frenchman Valley Campground inside the park in the West Block.

Day 5: Stayed in Grasslands National Park.

Day 6: Drove to Drumheller, Alberta on Highways 32, 44, and 570 from Swift Current. Went to Willow Creek Hoodoos. Slept at River Grove Campground and Cabins.

Day 7: Went to Royal Tyrrell Museum and Horseshoe Valley, Drove to Revelstoke, BC

Day 8: Drove home to Kamloops, BC

Mammal List From the Trip:

1. Coyote – 8
2. Red Fox – 1
3. Richardson's Ground Squirrel – abundant on the Prairies
4. Columbian Ground Squirrel – 3
5. Red Squirrel – 3
6. Muskrat – 2
7. American Badger – 2
8. Bison – 125
9. Elk – 2
10. Mountain Goat – 7
11. Pronghorn – 35
12. White-tailed Deer – 17
13. Mule Deer – 22
14. White-tailed Jackrabbit – 1

Bird List From the Trip:

51. Canada Goose 233
52. Blue-winged Teal 53
53. Cinnamon Teal 17
54. Northern Shoveler 310
55. Gadwall 158
56. American Wigeon 3
57. Mallard 69
58. Northern Pintail 4
59. Green-winged Teal 26
60. Canvasback 2
61. Redhead 37
62. Lesser Scaup 43
63. Bufflehead 2
64. Ruddy Duck 84
65. Sharp-tailed Grouse 2
66. Gray Partridge 5
67. Ring-necked Pheasant 6
68. Rock Pigeon 10
69. Eurasian Collared-Dove 8
70. Mourning Dove 38
71. Common Nighthawk 26
72. Sora 7
73. American Coot 22
74. Black-necked Stilt 13
75. American Avocet 136
76. Killdeer 25
77. Upland Sandpiper 10
78. Long-billed Curlew 16
79. Marbled Godwit 33
80. Wilson's Snipe 2
81. Wilson's Phalarope 174
82. Spotted Sandpiper 1
83. Willet 68
84. Sabine's Gull 1
85. Franklin's Gull 1089
86. Ring-billed Gull 3
87. California Gull 249
88. Black Tern 5
89. Forster's Tern 4
90. Common Tern 1
91. Pied-billed Grebe 1
92. Eared Grebe 70
93. Western Grebe 21
94. Double-crested Cormorant 21
95. White-faced Ibis 11
96. Black-crowned Night Heron 5
97. Great Blue Heron 3
98. American White Pelican 23
99. Turkey Vulture 7
1. Golden Eagle 1
2. Sharp-shinned Hawk 1
3. Northern Harrier 2
4. Bald Eagle 1
5. Swainson's Hawk 23
6. Red-tailed Hawk 8
7. Ferruginous Hawk 11
8. Great Horned Owl 2
9. Burrowing Owl 6
10. Red-naped Sapsucker 3
11. Red-headed Woodpecker 1
12. Hairy Woodpecker 1
13. Downy Woodpecker 1
14. Northern Flicker 3
15. Merlin 1
16. Peregrine Falcon 1
17. Western Wood-Pewee 1
18. Least Flycatcher 8
19. Hammond's Flycatcher 3
20. Say's Phoebe 1
21. Western Kingbird 25
22. Eastern Kingbird 33
23. Cassin's Vireo 1
24. Warbling Vireo 5
25. Red-eyed Vireo 2
26. Loggerhead Shrike 7
27. Steller's Jay 1
28. Black-billed Magpie 21
29. American Crow 12
30. Common Raven 23
31. Black-capped Chickadee 4
32. Horned Lark 83
33. Bank Swallow 22
34. Tree Swallow 10
35. Violet-green Swallow 1
36. Purple Martin 2
37. Northern Rough-winged Swallow 8
38. Barn Swallow 27
39. Cliff Swallow 24
40. Golden-crowned Kinglet 1
41. Red-breasted Nuthatch 1
42. Rock Wren 14
43. Northern House Wren 8
44. Marsh Wren 6
45. European Starling 21
46. Gray Catbird 2
47. Brown Thrasher 3
48. Mountain Bluebird 3
49. Veery 3
50. Swainson's Thrush 2

100. American Robin 48
101. Cedar Waxwing 8
102. House Sparrow 11
103. Sprague's Pipit 9
104. House Finch 2
105. Red Crossbill 1
106. Pine Siskin 10
107. American Goldfinch 9
108. Chestnut-collared Longspur 10
109. Grasshopper Sparrow 3
110. Chipping Sparrow 2
111. Clay-colored Sparrow 25
112. Field Sparrow 1
113. Lark Sparrow 4
114. Lark Bunting 16
115. Dark-eyed Junco 1
116. Vesper Sparrow 27
117. Savannah Sparrow 15
118. Baird's Sparrow 2
119. Song Sparrow 3
120. Spotted Towhee 2
121. Yellow-headed Blackbird 78
122. Bobolink 3
123. Western Meadowlark 68
124. Baltimore Oriole 4
125. Red-winged Blackbird 57
126. Brown-headed Cowbird 68
127. Brewer's Blackbird 66
128. Common Grackle 26
129. Orange-crowned Warbler 1
130. MacGillivray's Warbler 1
131. Common Yellowthroat 4
132. American Redstart 2
133. Yellow Warbler 19
134. Yellow-rumped Warbler 4
135. Western Tanager 2

