



**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.

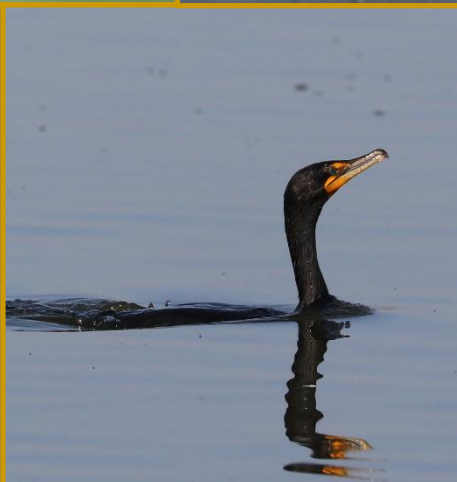
Clockwise from top right: Eared Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American White Pelican, Richardson's Ground Squirrel, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, White-faced Ibis.



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 a 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 Grackle, Ferruginous Hawk, Common Tern





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

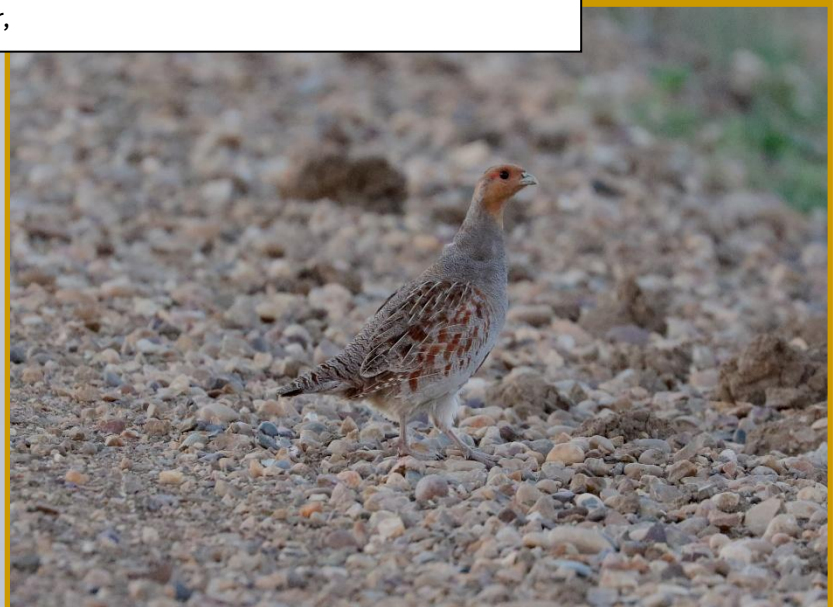


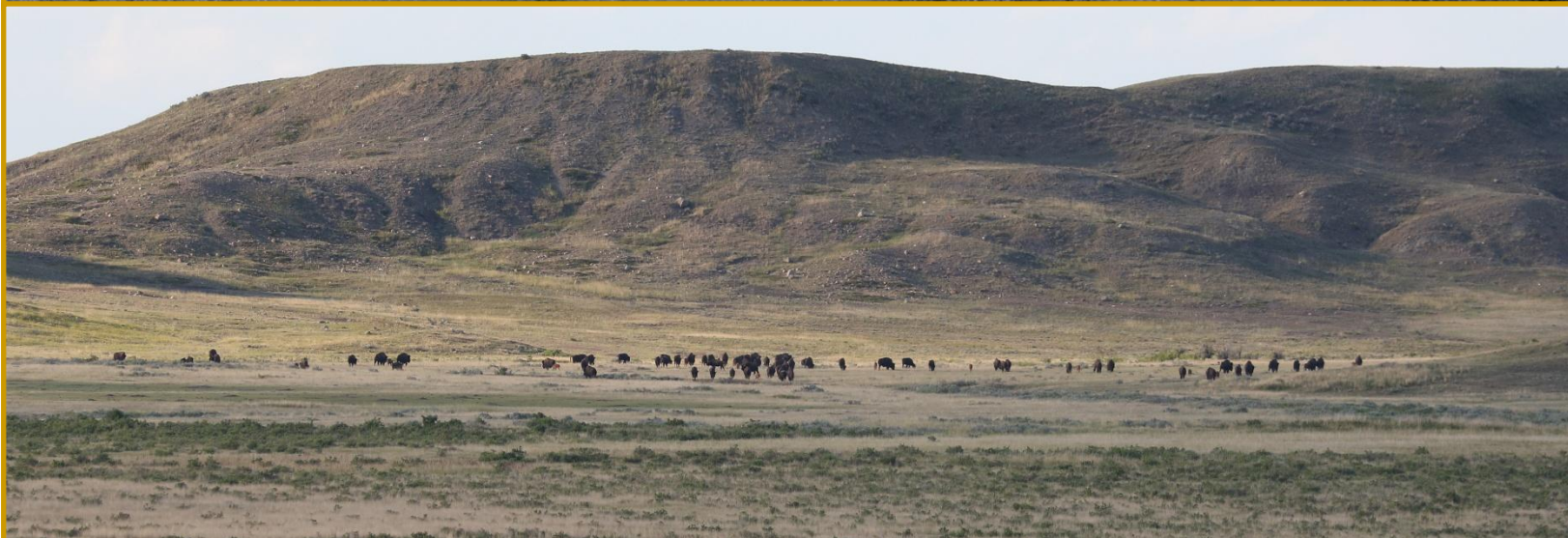
After one night in Chaplin, we headed the 2+ hours south to Grasslands National Park. We had pre-booked a camp site for two nights in the West Block at the Frenchman Valley Campground inside the park. This park was new for both of us and we thoroughly enjoyed our time there. We did some hiking, wildlife 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,







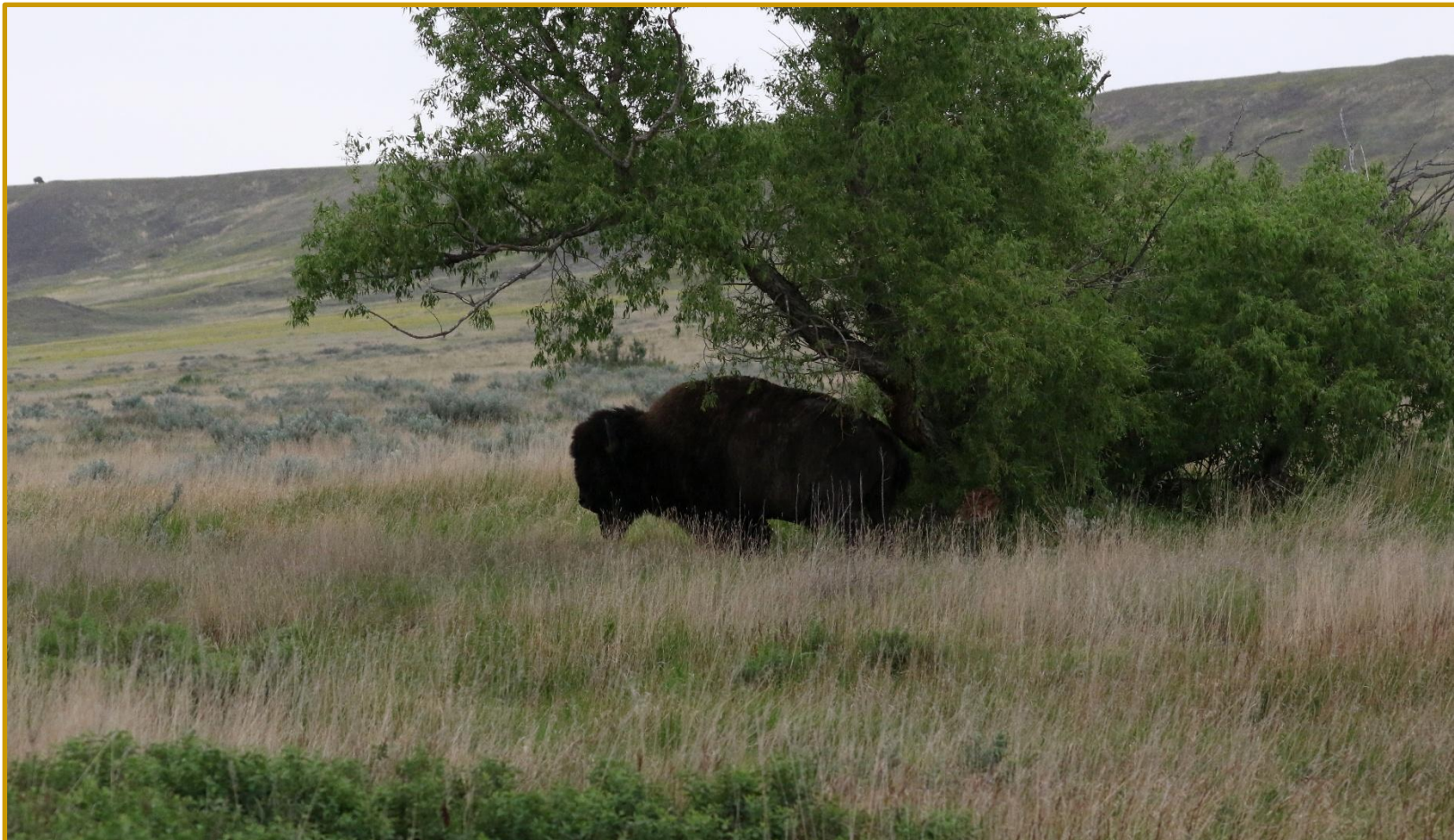
Previous Page: A Mule Deer and Coyote standoff. Some of the cow and calf Bison seen, 3 Coyotes hunting Prairie Dogs or Ground Squirrels.

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

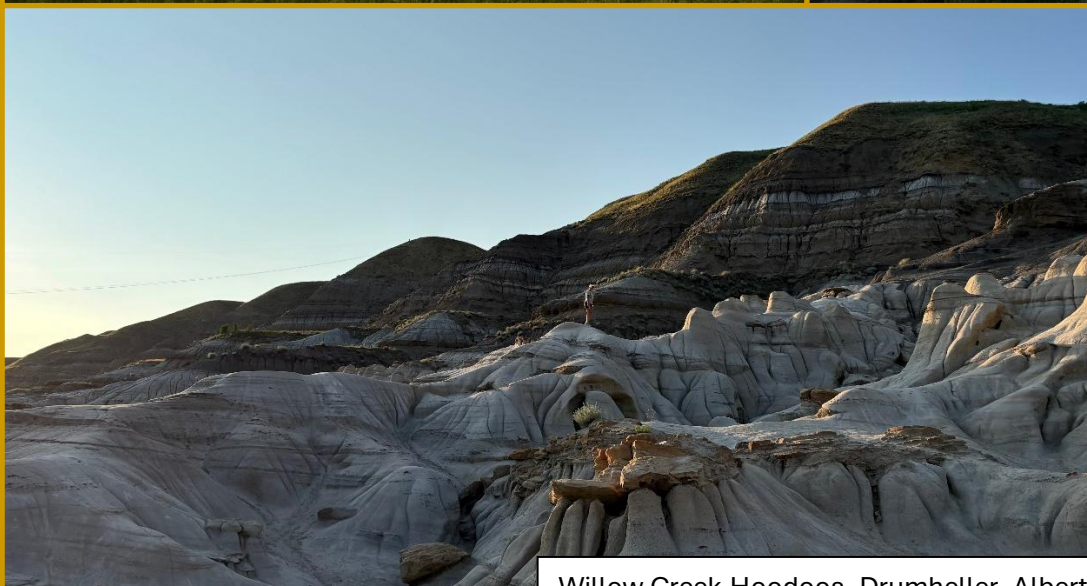




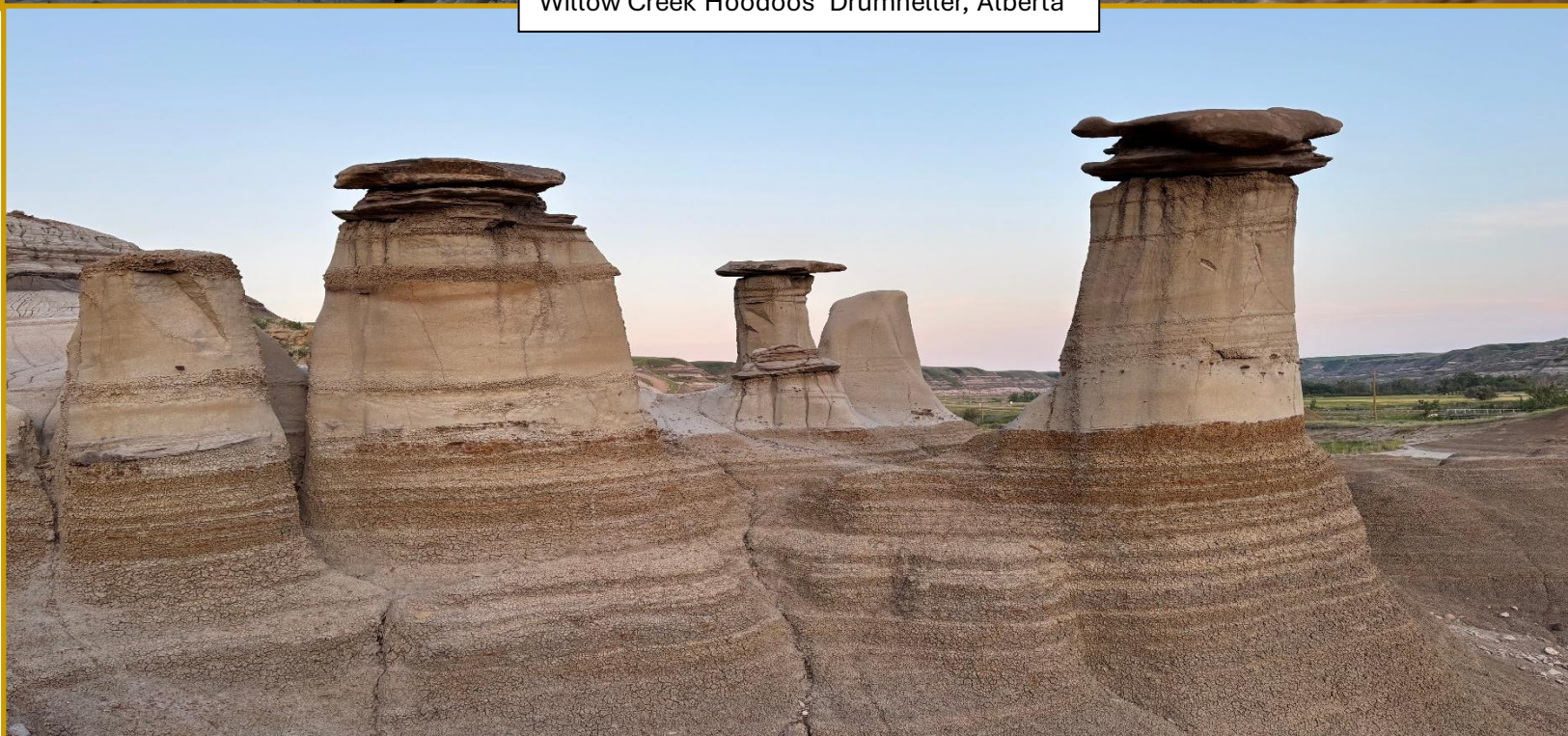
Clockwise from top: Plains Bison, Black-tailed Prairie Dog, Chestnut-collared Longspur, some type of Fritillary Butterfly.



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.

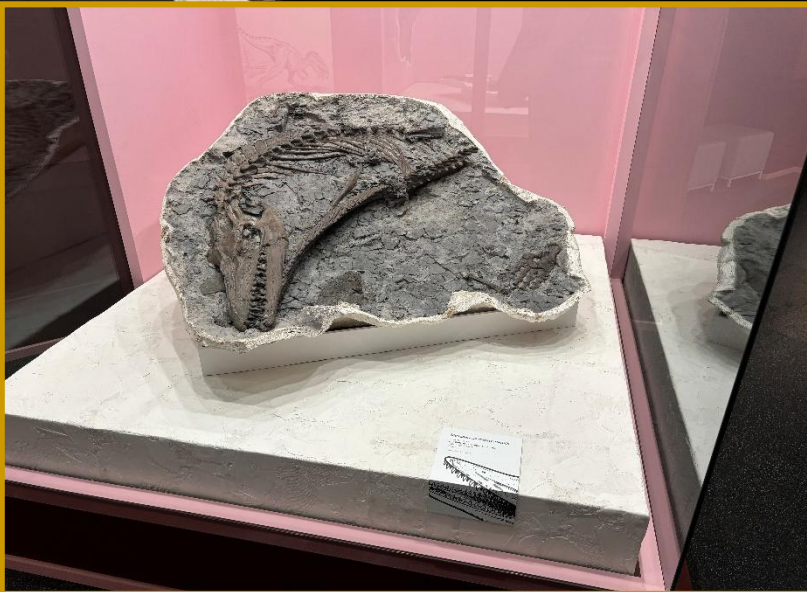


Willow Creek Hoodoos Drumheller, Alberta





Royal Tyrrell Musuem Drumheller, Alberta



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

