

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2015

Sunday, December 20

We will be surveying areas in Central Alberta to count as many birds as we can. Call Judy at 403-358-1098 to confirm that you will be counting and where you will be counting so no duplications of counts occurs.

There will be a potluck supper at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre at 6:00 p.m. for counters. Bring your own plates, cups and utensils and a hot/cold dish. Coffee and juice will be supplied.



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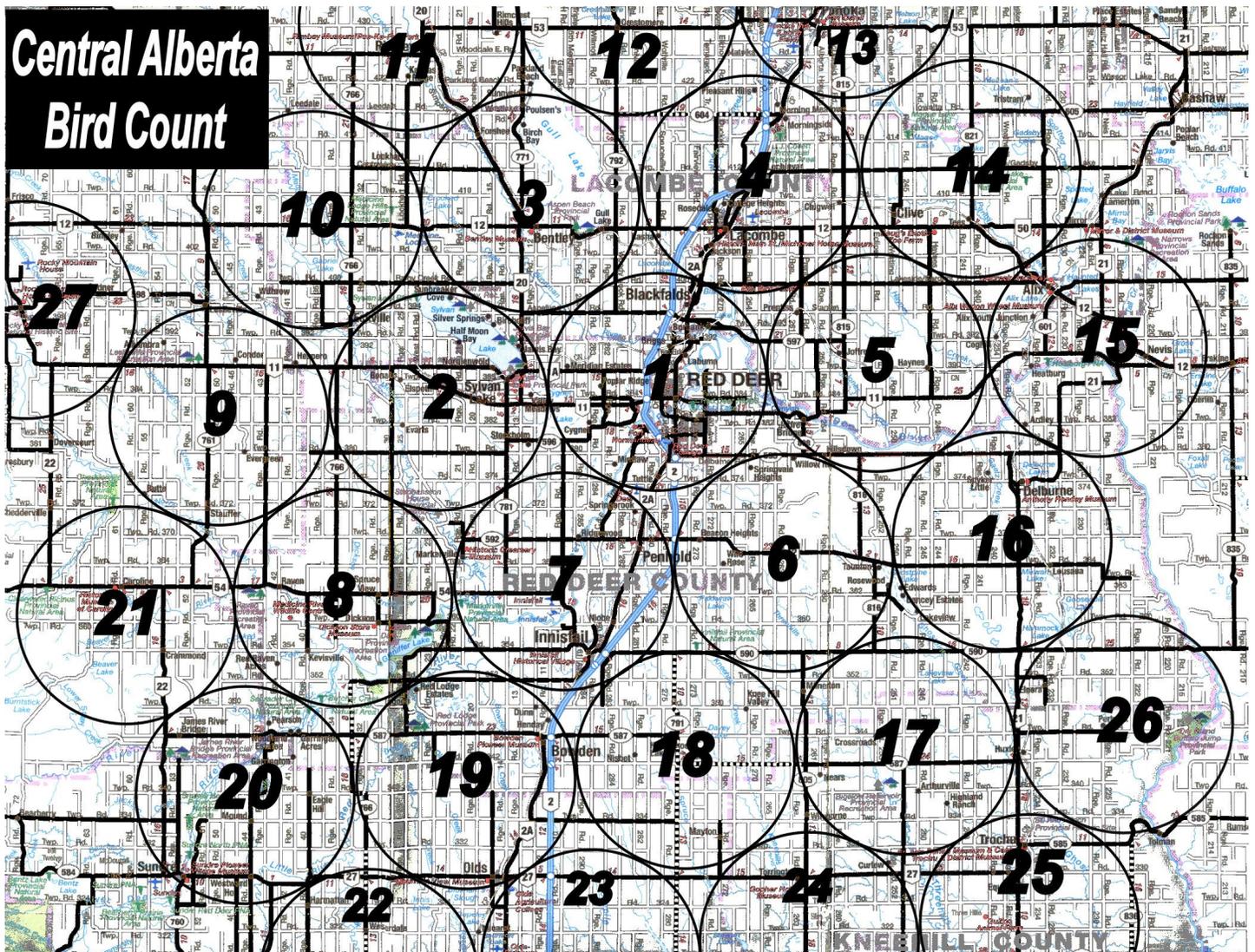


Red Deer River Naturalists



www.rdrn.ca

Central Alberta Bird Count



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INSTRUCTIONS

- ◆ Counts must be made during a single calendar day within the official CBC period.
- ◆ CBC 2016 will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can also *On!* (count before 9:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.). There is no minimum time limit, and you can watch your feeders or count birds on foot, by car or using any other mode of transportation.
- ◆ A Count area must fill (preferably) or fit entirely within a 24-km diameter official count circle.
- ◆ It is important to record low and high temperatures, as well as snow and sky conditions.
- ◆ All counters must record hours and kilometres walked/driven/skied, etc.
- ◆ You can also record any interesting or unusual bird seen any time during the Count Week (three days before and three days after the official Count Day). Please make sure, though, that you mark down when and where you saw the bird and what the bird was doing at the time. Add these birds to your tally sheet but make sure it is evident that it is a Count Week (CW) bird.

- ◆ Tally sheets must be received by Dec. 29. You can drop sheets off (Attn: Judy) at KWNC, mail to RDRN Box 785, Red Deer, AB T4N 5H2, or email to rd.rn@hotmail.com. Put “CBC” in the subject line.

HOW TO COUNT LARGE NUMBERS OF BIRDS

If hordes of birds are coming and going from your yard, counting them all can be a challenge. Don't give up! Instead, count a subgroup of 10 or 25 birds and see how large that group looks. Then make several visual “sweeps,” counting how many such groups are in view. Multiply the number of sweeps by the size of your subgroup (e.g., 5 sweeps x 10 birds/sweep = 50 birds) To get the best estimate, repeat this procedure at various times throughout the day, and average your results.

**Please make sure you register
with Judy (403-358-1098) so du-
plication can be avoided.**

PINE WARBLER SIGHTING

By Myrna Pearman

On Tuesday November 3, Shelley and I arrived back home from a morning trip to Jim and Bonnie Potters. We'd driven out to their beautiful property south of Delburne in hopes of getting photos of a snowshoe hare. Jim and Bonnie have several hares on their property, some of which were still in the process of acquiring their white winter pelage.

Of course, the hares were out and about till about a half hour before we arrived. We wandered the property for an hour but didn't see any sign of the bunnies. We returned home feeling a little disappointed about the hares, but still happy to have been able to enjoy some time wandering on the beautiful "Potter's Paradise."

It was when I was unloading the vehicle upon our return home that I caught sight of a small yellow bird on my deck. Although I recognized the bird as a fall warbler, I had no idea what species it was. I grabbed the camera, which still had the 80-400 bunny-hunting lens attached.

The bird was quite skittish, so I approached quickly but cautiously. I was able to snap some pictures as it hopped atop a deck tub, then down onto the deck (where it pecked at the sunflower chips), then over to an apple tree before flying away into a nearby spruce grove. The entire encounter lasted less than two minutes.

I sent the images to bird-expert friends, who came up with the suggestions of Black-throated Green, Blackpoll and Pine Warbler. I then sent the images to Dr. Jocelyn Hudon, Curator of Ornithology at the Royal Alberta Museum. He confirmed that it was indeed a Pine Warbler, likely an AHY male. Dr. Hudon also provided information about past Alberta records for this bird (see below).

On Friday, November 6, I saw the bird one more time, again feeding on sunflower chips. It was at the feeder for about an hour before flying off into the woods. I invited several birder friends to come over, perchance it might continue to hang around. A few enthusiasts have been here since, but the bird has not been seen again. Luckily, I was at the right place at the right time, with a camera at the ready, when this little cherub graced us, albeit briefly, with his presence.

I am also pleased to report that, upon returning to Potter's Paradise last week, a snowshoe hare—still sporting brown ears and a mottled forehead—allowed me to take its picture!



Alberta Rare Bird Records for Pine Warbler:

Dr Jocelyn Hudon, Curator of Ornithology, Royal Alberta Museum
ACCPETED

June 5, 1924 (Castor – Specimen – William Rowan) ref: Salt, W.R.. 1973. *Alberta Vireos and Wood Warblers*. Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta. Publication No. 3. Edmonton, AB. 141 pp.

June- July, 1928 (near Boyle – several pairs – T.E. Randall, D.C. Oberholser) ref: Salt, W.R.. 1973. *Alberta Vireos and Wood Warblers*. Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta. Publication No. 3. Edmonton, AB. 141 pp.

Sept. 29, 1987 (Calgary – written report – Bob Storms, F. Braxier) ref: Harris, W.C. 1988. *Prairie Province Region*. *American Birds*. 42: 92-93 and Hudon, J., Klauke, R., Lein, M.R., Riddell, J. Ritchie, B. and Wershler, R. 2006. *Sixth report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee*. *Nature Alberta*. 36 (2): 16-18. [1 imm in University Heights, Calgary on Sept 29/87 (RMW, RWS)]

Dec. 19, 1993 - Feb. 10, 1994 (Calgary – Photo? – Nicolas Totino, Andrew Slater, Mairi Babey, Harold Pinel, Jack Steeves, o. obs) ref: Sherrington, P. 1994. *Alberta Seasonal Bird Report Dec. 1, 1993- Feb. 28, 1994*. *PICA*. 14 (2): 40 and Hudon, J., Klauke, R., Lein, M.R., Riddell, J. Ritchie, B. and Wershler, R. 2006. *Sixth report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee*. *Nature Alberta*. 36 (2): 16-18. [1f/imm at Riley Park on Dec 23/93 & Jan 3/94 (RMW) many observers]

Sept. 9, 2003 (Taber – written report – Lloyd Bennett) ref: Hudon, J., Klauke, R., Lein, M.R., Riddell, J. Ritchie, B. and Wershler, R. 2006. *Sixth report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee*. *Nature Alberta*. 36 (2): 16-18.

OTHERS

no date (Cypress Hills – Sight record – old record; no information) ref: Salt, W.R.. 1973. *Alberta Vireos and Wood Warblers*. Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta. Publication No. 3. Edmonton, AB. 141 pp.

Aug 28-29 & Sept 8, 1956 (Glenevis – Sight records – George Pegg) ref: Salt, W.R.. 1973. *Alberta Vireos and Wood Warblers*. Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta. Publication No. 3. Edmonton, AB. 141 pp. [Note: from the observer: "Perhaps you should not consider this species from here until more observations are made, as sight records are not thought much of anyway, are they?"]

June 8, 1965 (Leduc – Sight record – H. Burns - fide Ed Jones) ref: Pinel H.W., W.W. Smith, and C.R. Wershler. 1993. *Alberta Birds, 1971-1980, Vol. 2, Passerines*, Provincial Museum of Alberta, *Natural History Occasional Paper No. 20*, Edmonton, AB. 238 pp. [Note: this record was not known to Sadler and Myres (1976) or Salt and Salt (1976) and appears to be second hand to Ed Jones].

1 imm at IBS on Sept 12/86 (RMW)

1 at IBS on July 24/89 (JRR)

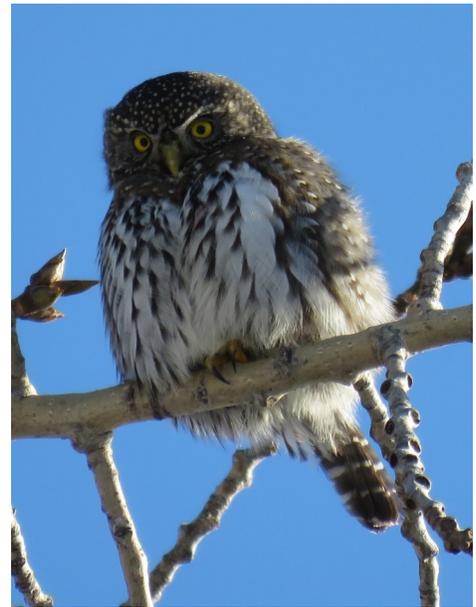
Aug. 27, 1995 (Edmonton – Ed Mah-Lim) ref: Sherrington, P. 1995. *Alberta Seasonal Bird Report Aug – Sept., 1995*. *PICA*. 15 (4): 43



FLOWER FOCUS AND NATURE HIKES

- will resume again in January -

THE BIRDS OF CHRISTMAS



Top (Bonnie Mullin)—House Finch, Pygmy Owl
Above (Bertha Ford)— Ruffed Grouse, White-breasted Nuthatch
Inset (Bill Heinsen) Black-capped Chickadee

The Red Deer River Naturalists, the first natural history organization to be established in Alberta, was incorporated as a society in 1906. The objectives of the society are to foster an increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of natural history, and to support conservation measures dealing with our environment, wildlife and natural resources.

Annual membership is \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families.

Regular meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of most months at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre, 6300-45 Ave., Red Deer, AB. Non-members are welcome.

Members are encouraged to contribute to this newsletter. Deadline is the last Friday of the month.

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