

PRESIDENTS REPORT–2025

RICK TALLAS

- My tenure as RDRN President will be over on January 22, 2026. Four years have gone by extremely fast
- These have been very exciting times for RDRN
- RDRN has received two generous bequeathments, which have been invested with CFCAB (Community Foundation of Central Alberta). With proper fiscal management, these funds will enable RDRN to be *A Voice for Nature in Central Alberta* well into the future
- To all the Board Members and volunteers, who are so committed to supporting RDRN, thank you. Our success has been largely due to your guidance and expertise. Being President of RDRN has been a real pleasure and I have been very grateful for the opportunity.
- RDRN continues to voice their concerns regarding:
 - Proposed changes to Zoning Bylaws in Red Deer
 - Water extraction from Blindman and Medicine River
 - Intermunicipal Development Planning
 - East Lincoln Development proposal
 - Provincial changes to hunting and trapping (Wolverines, Grizzly Bears)
 - Ongoing issue of Molly Banister Dr Extension
 - Corb Lund coal petition

In a nutshell:

- Our membership continues to grow (153)
- We have increased our giving through grants and donations
- Our social media following continues to grow and our websites rdrn.ca (RDRN) and naturecentral.org (Nature Central) and birdingtrailsalberta.com (Central Alberta Birding Trails) continue to provide a wealth of information and I highly encourage everyone to visit them
- We continue to offer Bird Focus Group, Flower Focus and Nature Central outings, and we lead the May Species and Christmas Bird Counts
- We continue to increase our public profile through our monthly newsletter, posters, pins, T-shirts, brochures and bookmarks
- Our monthly meetings have enjoyed record attendance over the past few years; thanks to the very knowledgeable and passionate speakers. Hosting these events has been a real treat for me (engaging with our members and speakers)
- Let your voice be heard!



RED DEER AND AREA 2025 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

BY JOHN AND SHELLEY-ANNE GOULET, COUNT COMPILERS

Date: December 21, 2025

Participants: 69; **Areas Covered:** Zone 1 (Red Deer); Zone 2 (Sylvan Lake); Zone 3 (Gull Lake); Zone 4 (Lacombe) Zone 5 (Joffre); Zone 6 (Penhold); Zone 7 (Innisfail); Zone 9 (Condor); Zone 10 (Gilby); Zone 11 (Rimbey); Zone 14 (Clive); Zone 15 (Alix); Zone 16 (Delburne); Zone 17 (Bigelow Reservoir); Zone 18 (Davey Lake); Zone 19 (Bowden/Olds); Zone 26 (Dry Island Buffalo Jump); and Zone 27 (Rocky Mountain House). **Start Time:** 8:00 AM **End Time:** 5:00 PM **Weather:** Temperature varied from -27 C to -18 C. **Wind Speed:** 2 to 17 km/hr. **Wind Direction:** NNE to NNW. **Cloud Cover:** Variable. **Team Distance/Hours:** Team Hours spent on Feeder Watch was 39.5 hrs. Team Hours spent on foot walking was 8.75 hrs. Distance walked totaled 16.1 km. Team hours spent driving were 45.5 hrs. Distance travelled by vehicle totaled 1,572.82 km. In summary, total team hours = 93.75; while total team mileage = 1,588.92. **Number of Species:** 40 **Number of Birds:** 4,327 **Number of Count Week Birds:** 2 **Number of Count Week Species:** 2. **Highlights:** A few species were observed in this year's count that were not recorded last year (Snowy Owl, American Goldfinch, Golden-Crowned Kinglet, European Starling, Black-backed Woodpecker and Merlin). Of particular interest was a Gyrfalcon recorded by John Caddy in Zone 3. The last time one was recorded was during the 2014 CBC. Another count week sighting was a Western Meadowlark in Zone 17 by John, Shelley-Anne and Chelsea Goulet. This species was last recorded in the 1988 CBC. Waterfowl species were down this year, with a lone Mallard being recorded at Riverbend in Red Deer. It was extremely cold on count day, which likely explains their scarcity. Bohemian Waxwings were abundant on count day, with Goulet family observing several flocks totaling about 500 individuals in Zone 27. Snow Buntings and Common Redpolls were abundant on count day. Gray Partridge numbers were up significantly from previous years (74 in 2025 vs 191 this year). This is the highest number recorded in many years. Mammal species observed during the count included both Mule and White-tailed Deer, Porcupine, Moose, Coyotes, White-tailed Jackrabbits and Red Squirrels.

<u>Species</u>	<u>2025 Count</u>		
Canada Goose	0	Black-Billed Magpie	227
Mallard	1	American Crow	46
Lesser Scaup	0	Common Raven	227
Common Goldeneye	0	Black-Capped Chickadee	361
Bufflehead	0	Boreal Chickadee	6
Common Merganser	0	Bohemian Waxwing	1,101
Ruffed Grouse	6	Cedar Waxwing	0
Gray Partridge	191	Red-Breasted Nuthatch	14
Rock Pigeon	130	White-Breasted Nuthatch	35
Eurasian Collared Dove	4	Brown Creeper	0
Snowy Owl	2	European Starling	12
Bald Eagle	15	Golden Crowned Kinglet	2
Great Horned Owl	0	American Robin	2
Great Grey Owl	0	American Goldfinch	9
Downy Woodpecker	50	House Sparrow	413
Hairy Woodpecker	19	Sparrow Species	0
Northern Flicker	18	American Tree Sparrow	0
Pileated Woodpecker	15	Pine Grosbeak	40
Black-backed Woodpecker	1	House Finch	83
Merlin	1 CW	Purple Finch	3
Northern Shrike	0	Redpoll	433
Yellow Bellied Sapsucker	0	White-Winged Crossbill	37
Sharp shinned Hawk	1	Pine Siskin	11
Gyrfalcon	1	Snow Bunting	671
Mourning Dove	0	Dark-Eyed Junco	46
Horned Lark	26	Blue Jay	64
Canada Jay	2	Western Meadowlark	1 CW
American Goldfinch	9	Total Individual Species	4,327
		Total Bird Species	40



Editor's Note: Thanks to Susan van der Hoek for formatting this information for the newsletter.