



BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK 2014 RESOURCE BRIEF



Above: The Western Meadowlark was the most abundant bird during the 2013 and 2014 field seasons. The Western Meadowlark, a member of the blackbird family, has a feeding behavior called “gaping” where they insert their bill in the soil or other substrate and pry it open to access seeds and insects that many bird species can’t reach.

LANDBIRD MONITORING

Overview: Badlands National Park is the largest park in the Northern Great Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network (NGPN) at over 240,000 acres. Roughly half of the park’s acres are badland formations; the other half is mixed-grass prairie. The park lies at an avian crossroads where both eastern and western species can be observed. To date, more than 200 bird species have been recorded for the park.

The NGPN assisted with development of a long-term bird monitoring protocol jointly with Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO). A panel design where grids are surveyed on a rotating schedule was developed to facilitate complete coverage of the park. The 2014 breeding season was the second year of bird surveys for Badlands NP.

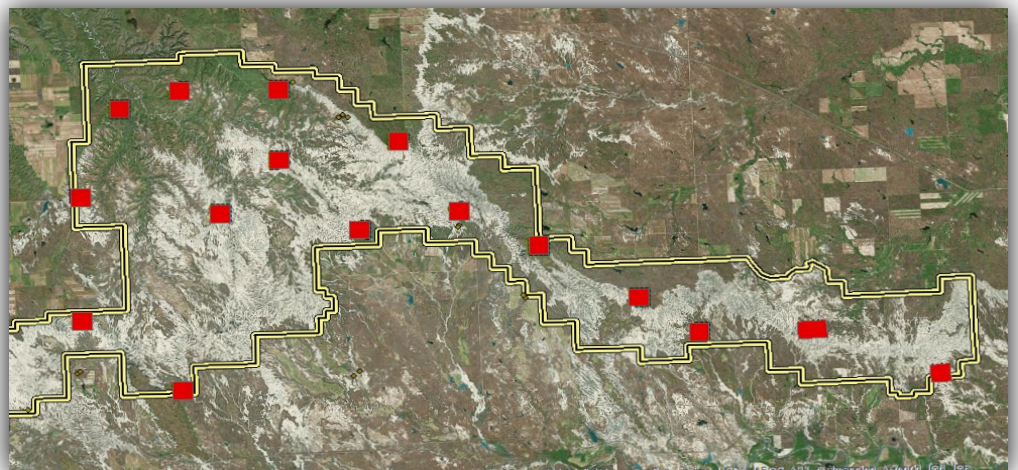
In 2014, RMBO surveyed 187 points within 16 1km² grids, an increase from 128 surveyed in 2013. The counts were conducted in May,

June, and July, and a total of 2,225 birds representing 75 species were recorded.

Highlights: Nearly a third of the birds recorded at Badlands NP were Western Meadowlarks at 32% of the detections. Other common species included the Cliff Swallow (9%), Mourning Dove (9%), and Grasshopper Sparrow (9%). Similar to 2013, no new species were recorded for the park.

Both the Western Meadowlark and the Grasshopper Sparrow are listed by Partners in Flight as Species of Importance (page 2). Although Western Meadowlarks are numerous locally, the North American Breeding Bird Survey suggests their breeding populations have declined throughout the U.S. and Canada at about 1 percent per year since 1966. In addition, the Grasshopper Sparrow population declined 67 percent between 1966 and 2010. These species are declining due to habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation.

Right: Grid locations surveyed during the 2014 field season.





BIRD SPECIES DETECTED AT BADLANDS NP

Common Name	2013	2014	Common Name	2013	2014
American Coot	0	1	Loggerhead Shrike	12	4
American Crow	25	30	Long-billed Curlew	0	3
American Goldfinch	15	2	Mallard	18	13
American Kestrel	0	4	Mountain Bluebird	1	2
American Robin	3	1	Mourning Dove	118	205
Bank Swallow	1	0	Northern Flicker	0	3
Barn Swallow	4	2	Northern Harrier	1	0
Bell's Vireo	0	2	Northern Pintail	0	3
Black-billed Magpie	4	7	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	4	2
Black-capped Chickadee	0	1	Northern Shoveler	0	1
Blue Grosbeak	1	9	Orange-crowned Warbler	0	1
Blue-winged Teal	0	1	Orchard Oriole	0	14
Bobolink	4	15	Prairie Falcon	0	1
Brewer's Blackbird	12	4	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	0
Brown Thrasher	1	15	Red-eyed Vireo	1	0
Brown-headed Cowbird	164	110	Red-headed Woodpecker	0	4
Burrowing Owl	1	1	Red-tailed Hawk	1	1
Canada Goose	22	12	Red-winged Blackbird	121	109
Cedar Waxwing	0	6	Ring-necked Pheasant	5	2
Chipping Sparrow	1	5	Rock Pigeon	38	14
Clay-colored Sparrow	2	3	Rock Wren	74	66
Cliff Swallow	122	210	Savannah Sparrow	2	1
Common Grackle	4	1	Say's Phoebe	24	35
Common Nighthawk	0	3	Sharp-tailed Grouse	7	15
Common Yellowthroat	1	1	Spotted Towhee	14	10
Cooper's Hawk	0	1	Swainson's Hawk	0	1
Dark-eyed Junco	0	1	Tree Swallow	0	14
Dickcissel	0	1	Turkey Vulture	3	21
Eastern Kingbird	10	9	Upland Sandpiper	7	19
European Starling	0	8	Vesper Sparrow	8	1
Field Sparrow	8	8	Violet-green Swallow	4	9
Gadwall	0	3	Warbling Vireo	2	0
Golden Eagle	0	1	Western Kingbird	16	15
Grasshopper Sparrow	117	195	Western Meadowlark	441	707
Great Blue Heron	1	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	0	2
Horned Lark	70	120	White-throated Swift	2	10
House Wren	0	1	Wild Turkey	1	4
Killdeer	23	8	Yellow Warbler	7	9
Lark Bunting	18	32	Yellow-breasted Chat	0	3
Lark Sparrow	21	65	Yellow-headed Blackbird	3	1

***Species of Importance:**
Determined by Partners in Flight priority species list and the state of South Dakota priority list.

*Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. 2014. The Rocky Mountain Avian Data Center. { web app}. Brighton, CO. <http://adc.rmbo.org>. (Accessed December 4, 2014).

Protocol Contact:
Marcia_Wilson@nps.gov
General Ecologist
605-341-2803

