



BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK 2015 RESOURCE BRIEF



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Above: The blue-gray gnatcatcher was a new species for Badlands NP in 2015. The blue-gray gnatcatcher's nickname is "Little Mockingbird" because it takes parts of other birds' song and incorporates them into its own song.

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.

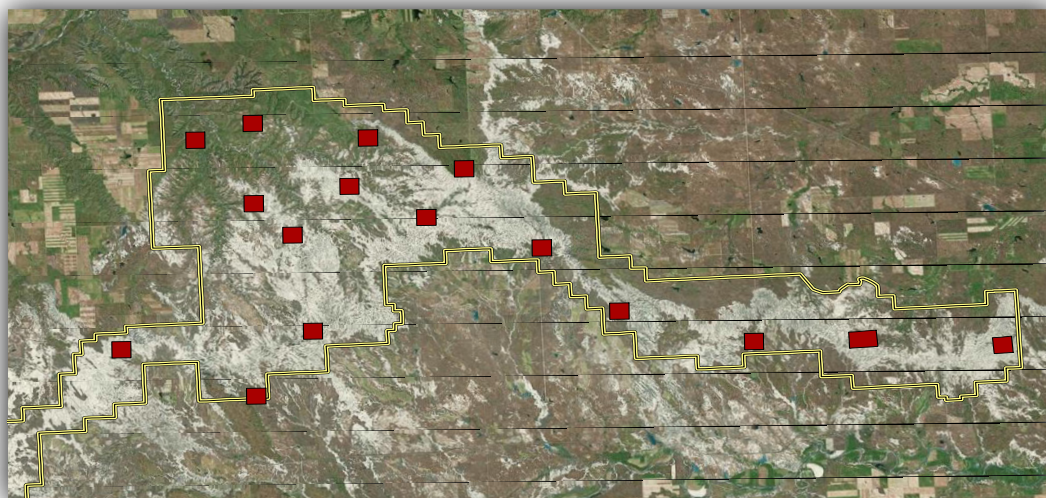
The Northern Great Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network developed a bird monitoring protocol jointly with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (formerly Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory). A panel design where grids are sampled on a rotation schedule was developed to facilitate complete coverage of the park. This research is a long-term effort to monitor species trends and densities.

The 2015 breeding season was the third year of bird surveys for Badlands NP. The Bird

Conservancy surveyed 161 points and recorded 2,410 birds representing 77 species.

Highlights: Over one third of the birds recorded at Badlands NP were western meadowlarks at 34% of the observations. Other common species included the mourning dove (11%), cliff swallow (9%), red-winged blackbird (8%), and grasshopper sparrow (4%). The European starling was the only non-native species recorded.

The blue-gray gnatcatcher was detected at Badlands NP for the first time in 2015. Its breeding range has been shifting northward since the early twentieth century and is now breeding in South Dakota and at other parks in our region. Research shows the blue-gray gnatcatcher's expansion northward is linked to warmer January temperatures.



Right: Grid locations surveyed during the 2015 field season.



BIRD SPECIES DETECTED AT BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Common Name	2014	2015	Common Name	2014	2015	Common Name	2014	2015
American Bittern	0	1	Common Yellowthroat	1	1	Prairie Falcon	1	5
American Coot	1	0	Cooper's Hawk	1	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	4	1
American Crow	30	42	Dark-eyed Junco	1	0	Red-tailed Hawk	1	1
American Goldfinch	2	10	Dickcissel	1	7	Red-winged Blackbird	109	197
American Kestrel	4	6	Eastern Bluebird	0	1	Ring-necked Pheasant	2	0
American Robin	1	0	Eastern Kingbird	9	6	Rock Pigeon	14	5
American White Pelican	0	6	European Starling	8	1	Rock Wren	66	77
Bank Swallow	0	3	Field Sparrow	8	8	Savannah Sparrow	1	0
Barn Swallow	2	1	Gadwall	3	0	Say's Phoebe	35	25
Bell's Vireo	2	6	Golden Eagle	1	0	Sharp-tailed Grouse	15	8
Black-billed Magpie	7	10	Grasshopper Sparrow	195	96	Spotted Towhee	10	35
Black-capped Chickadee	1	2	Great Blue Heron	1	1	Swainson's Hawk	1	2
Blue Grosbeak	9	13	Horned Lark	120	84	Tree Swallow	14	0
Blue Jay	0	1	House Wren	1	11	Turkey Vulture	21	2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	0	1	Killdeer	8	9	Upland Sandpiper	19	16
Blue-winged Teal	1	4	Lark Bunting	32	15	Vesper Sparrow	1	2
Bobolink	15	7	Lark Sparrow	65	87	Violet-green Swallow	9	12
Brewer's Blackbird	4	1	Loggerhead Shrike	4	2	Western Kingbird	15	15
Brewer's Sparrow	0	2	Long-billed Curlew	3	0	Western Meadowlark	707	823
Brown Thrasher	15	6	Mallard	13	11	White-breasted Nuthatch	2	0
Brown-headed Cowbird	110	127	Mountain Bluebird	2	6	White-throated Swift	10	2
Bullock's Oriole	0	1	Mourning Dove	205	269	Wild Turkey	4	3
Burrowing Owl	1	2	Northern Flicker	3	1	Willet	0	2
Canada Goose	12	10	Northern Harrier	0	1	Wilson's Phalarope	0	2
Cedar Waxwing	6	2	Northern Pintail	3	2	Yellow Warbler	9	22
Chipping Sparrow	5	1	Northern Rough-winged	2	4	Yellow-breasted Chat	3	12
Clay-colored Sparrow	3	2	Northern Shoveler	1	0	Yellow-headed Blackbird	1	5
Cliff Swallow	210	235	Orange-crowned Warbler	1	0	Yellow-rumped Warbler	0	1
Common Grackle	1	4	Orchard Oriole	14	1			
Common Nighthawk	3	2	Pine Siskin	0	1			

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

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