



AGATE FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT 2015 RESOURCE BRIEF



Above: A young male Bullock's Oriole. This species is commonly seen in the western United States during the summer breeding season. It migrates to Mexico for the winter.

LANDBIRD MONITORING

Overview: Agate Fossil Beds National Monument (AGFO) consists of 3,000 acres of mixed grass prairie and a broad floodplain of the Niobrara River that has created a riparian area for water-loving plants and wetland birds.

The Northern Great Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network developed a bird monitoring protocol jointly with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (formerly the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory). The 2015 breeding season was the third year of bird surveys at AGFO. This research is the beginning of a long-term effort to monitor species trends and densities.

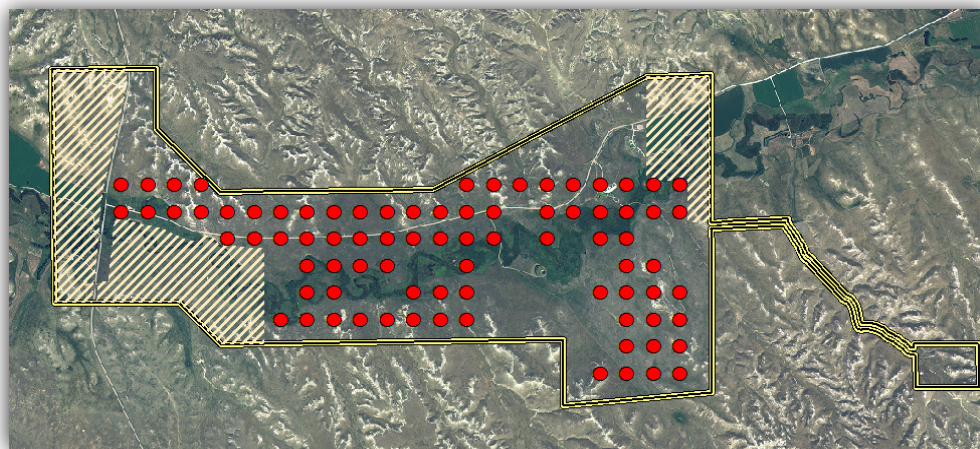
The Bird Conservancy surveyed 97 points in 2015, and a total of 1638 birds representing 52 species were recorded.

Highlights: The red-winged blackbird had the highest detection rate with 29% of

the species composition. Other common species included the western meadow-lark (19%), common yellowthroat (5%), mourning dove (5%) and rock wren (4%). The Eurasian-collared dove was the only non-native species recorded. Twenty species detected in the park are recognized as species of importance, including the Bullock's oriole (page2).

The habitat of the Bullock's oriole is the deciduous riparian areas of the park. The oriole is notable for its bright yellow-orange coloration and the pendant-style nest it produces. The nest hangs down from tree branches attached by knots tied by the female. The female uses twine, fibers, and grasses to weave the nest and lines it with willow cotton or feathers. This species has been listed as a "stewardship species," its numbers give us insight about changes to its specific habitat.

Right: Point locations surveyed during the 2015 field season.





BIRD SPECIES DETECTED AT AGATE FOSSIL BEDS NM

Common Name	2014	2015	Common	2014	2015
American Avocet	0	1	Killdeer	30	19
American Coot	0	2	Lark Bunting	139	18
American Crow	5	0	Lark Sparrow	27	54
American Goldfinch	12	16	Mallard	12	10
American Robin	6	3	Mourning Dove	114	78
American Wigeon	1	0	Northern Flicker	4	2
Bank Swallow	0	23	Northern Harrier	0	2
Barn Swallow	11	23	Northern Shoveler	1	2
Bell's Vireo	1	0	Orchard Oriole	0	5
Belted Kingfisher	0	1	Pied-billed Grebe	0	2
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	0	Red-tailed Hawk	2	1
Blue Jay	0	4	Red-winged Blackbird	276	477
Blue-winged Teal	1	15	Ring-necked Pheasant	0	27
Bobolink	1	6	Rock Pigeon	1	0
Brewer's Sparrow	1	0	Rock Wren	35	66
Brown Thrasher	4	4	Say's Phoebe	12	23
Brown-headed Cowbird	69	53	Sora	0	22
Bullock's Oriole	0	2	Townsend's Solitaire	1	0
Canada Goose	0	3	Turkey Vulture	1	1
Cliff Swallow	71	6	Upland Sandpiper	10	9
Common Grackle	0	7	Vesper Sparrow	0	1
Common Nighthawk	8	18	Virginia Rail	0	1
Common Yellowthroat	46	83	Western Kingbird	6	11
Cooper's Hawk	1	0	Western Meadowlark	243	316
Eastern Kingbird	6	6	Western Wood-Pewee	0	8
Eurasian Collared-Dove	0	40	Wilson's Phalarope	0	2
Field Sparrow	0	1	Wilson's Snipe	26	42
Grasshopper Sparrow	33	55	Wood Duck	0	2
Great Blue Heron	3	4	Yellow Warbler	10	16
Horned Lark	20	33	Yellow-headed Blackbird	0	12
House Wren	7	0			

***Species of Importance:**
Determined by Partners in
Flight priority species list and
State of Nebraska priority list.

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies 2016. The Rocky Mountain Avian Data Center. Brighton, CO. <http://adc.rmbo.org>.
(Accessed January 24, 2016).

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