



SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT 2015 RESOURCE BRIEF



Above: The horned lark favors bare, dry ground and avoids places where grass grows more than a few inches high.

LANDBIRD MONITORING

Overview: Scotts Bluff National Monument was established in 1919. It consists of 3003 acres to preserve and protect Scotts Bluff, Oregon Trail, Mitchell Pass and the adjacent prairie lands. Most of the Monument lands are in native mixed-grass prairie with some previously disturbed areas harboring a variety of non-native vegetation. Scotts Bluff is one of the few places in the Panhandle of Nebraska where wildlife is protected in a natural environment.

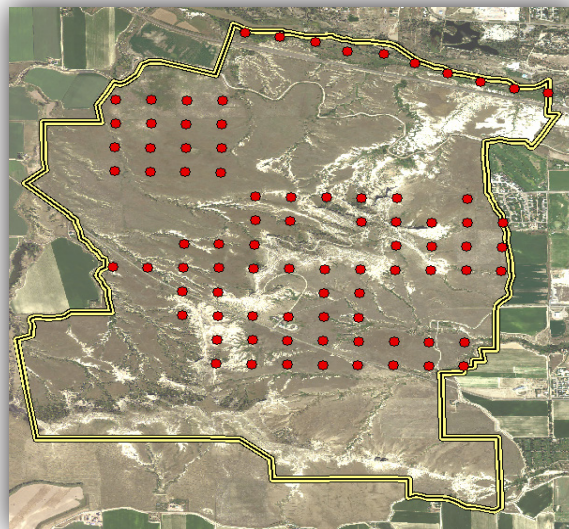
The Northern Great Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network developed a bird monitoring protocol jointly with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (formerly the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory). The 2015 breeding season was the third year of bird surveys at Scotts Bluff NM. This research is the beginning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

Technicians surveyed 10 points along the

riparian area and 79 points in the upland area. A total of 1,425 birds representing 61 species were recorded. This was a 32% increase in the total birds detected compared to 2014.

Highlights: The Western meadowlark had the highest detection rate at 16% followed by the common grackle at 8% of the species composition. Other common species included the mourning dove, grasshopper sparrow, spotted towhee, cliff swallow, and lark sparrow; each having 5% of the species composition.

Seventeen species detected at Scotts Bluff NM are listed as a species of importance including the horned lark (page 2). The horned lark is a year-round inhabitant of most of the U.S., including the Park. However, the 2014 State of the Birds Report has it listed as a Common Bird in Steep Decline. The horned lark's population has declined 62% since 1966, but the ecological driver of this decline is poorly understood. Hence, continued monitoring of this species is critical.



Right: Point locations surveyed during the 2015 field season.



BIRD SPECIES DETECTED AT SCOTTS BLUFF NM

Common Name	2014	2015	Common Name	2014	2015
American Crow	3	8	House Sparrow	0	6
American Goldfinch	20	31	House Wren	31	3
American Kestrel	3	6	Indigo Bunting	3	2
American Robin	12	25	Killdeer	4	1
Baltimore Oriole	1	0	Lark Bunting	3	2
Bank Swallow	0	24	Lark Sparrow	41	74
Barn Swallow	9	1	Lazuli Bunting	27	17
Belted Kingfisher	2	1	Mallard	3	1
Black-billed Magpie	33	36	Mourning Dove	62	84
Black-capped Chickadee	0	1	Northern Cardinal	1	0
Black-headed Grosbeak	4	1	Northern Flicker	4	0
Blue Grosbeak	43	41	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	8	12
Blue Jay	5	8	Orchard Oriole	2	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	9	16	Red-tailed Hawk	13	3
Brewer's Blackbird	26	0	Red-winged Blackbird	18	0
Brown Thrasher	3	6	Ring-necked Pheasant	1	30
Brown-headed Cowbird	25	44	Rock Pigeon	8	5
Bullock's Oriole	0	1	Rock Wren	26	60
Canada Goose	1	19	Say's Phoebe	11	23
Cedar Waxwing	12	8	Sharp-tailed Grouse	0	1
Chimney Swift	6	1	Spotted Towhee	56	85
Chipping Sparrow	1	2	Swainson's Hawk	0	1
Cliff Swallow	22	78	Tree Swallow	1	0
Common Grackle	56	123	Turkey Vulture	1	2
Common Nighthawk	0	1	Upland Sandpiper	1	1
Common Yellowthroat	3	1	Vesper Sparrow	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	3	0	Violet-green Swallow	40	0
Eastern Kingbird	1	2	Western Kingbird	38	24
Eurasian Collared-Dove	10	8	Western Meadowlark	123	228
European Starling	21	48	Western Wood-Pewee	0	1
Grasshopper Sparrow	5	83	White-breasted Nuthatch	3	0
Great Blue Heron	1	1	White-throated Swift	43	53
Great Crested Flycatcher	1	0	Wild Turkey	1	1
Great Horned Owl	0	1	Wood Duck	3	0
Horned Lark	8	9	Yellow Warbler	11	4
House Finch	12	6	Yellow-breasted Chat	26	58

***Species of Importance**
Determined by Partners in Flight priority species list and the 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).

Protocol Contact:
Angela_Jarding@nps.gov
Data Manager
605-341-2809

