



2016 Landbird Monitoring Devils Tower National Monument



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Cliff swallows made up 13% of all bird detections at Devils Tower during the 2016 surveys, more than any other species. Their abundance increased significantly at parks across the region in 2016.

Overview

Devils Tower National Monument was established to preserve and protect a unique geologic formation that protrudes from the surrounding landscape. This small 1,347 acre monument has a diverse landscape including Ponderosa pine forest, bur oak, and cottonwood floodplain. The Monument supports a variety of birds; and the tower is a popular nesting site for Prairie and Peregrine Falcons.

The Northern Great Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network developed a bird monitoring protocol jointly with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (formerly the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory). The 2016 breeding season was the fourth

year of bird surveys at Devils Tower NM. This research is the beginning of a long-term effort to monitor species trends and densities.

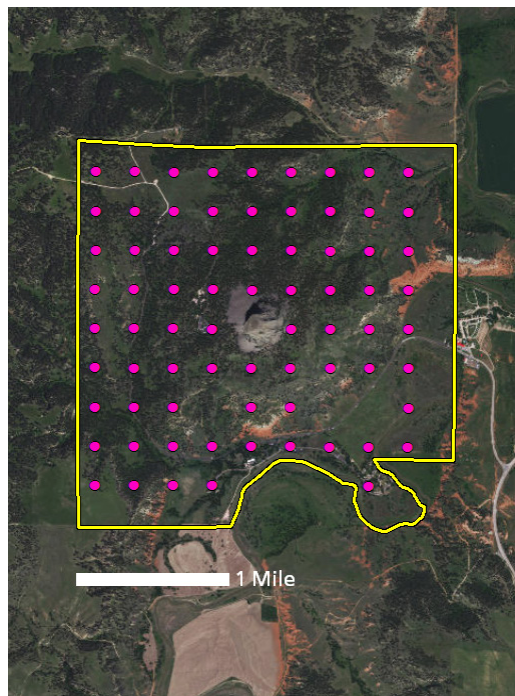
Bird Conservancy surveyed 73 points in 2016, and a total of 1,512 birds representing 59 species were recorded.

Highlights

The cliff swallow had the highest detection rate at 13% of the species composition. Other common species included the American robin (6%), western meadowlark (6%), and western wood-peewee (6%). The eastern bluebird was recorded for the first time since surveying began in 2013. Non-native species detected were the Eurasian-collared dove, rock pigeon, ring-necked pheasant, and European starling.

Interesting Fact

Cliff swallow detections substantially increased in 2016 with 204 detections compared to a high of 14 in previous survey years. Interestingly, other parks in the region also had significant increases in cliff swallow abundance. Expert ornithologists with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies could not explain the increase. However, cliff swallows are social birds and often nest in large colonies near water and along cliffs, canyons, buildings and bridges.



Right: Locations of the 73 points surveyed within Devils Tower National Monument (border in yellow) during the 2016 field season.

Results of bird surveys at Devils Tower NM

* **Names of species of Importance are bold.** These were determined using priority lists from Partners in Flight and the State of Wyoming.

Protocol Contact

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Common Name	2015	2016
American Crow	9	19
American Goldfinch	38	15
American Kestrel	3	1
American Robin	143	85
Bald Eagle*	1	0
Black-billed Magpie	25	18
Black-capped Chickadee	34	49
Black-headed Grosbeak	8	16
Blue Jay	19	21
Brewer's Blackbird*	0	1
Brown Creeper	0	11
Brown-headed Cowbird	90	62
Bullock's Oriole	21	21
Canada Goose	42	62
Cedar Waxwing	4	0
Chipping Sparrow	66	57
Clay-colored Sparrow	1	0
Cliff Swallow	0	204
Common Yellowthroat	1	0
Dark-eyed Junco	1	2
Downy Woodpecker	7	4
Eastern Bluebird	0	1
Eastern Kingbird*	5	8
Eurasian Collared-Dove	9	9
European Starling	1	7
Gray Catbird	1	0
Great Horned Owl	1	2
Hairy Woodpecker	4	9
Hermit Thrush	2	0
House Wren	84	59
Lark Sparrow*	50	34
Lazuli Bunting	0	1
Least Flycatcher	2	2
Mountain Bluebird	21	5

Common Name	2015	2016
Mourning Dove	36	51
Northern Flicker*	23	27
Ovenbird	1	0
Peregrine Falcon	4	4
Pine Siskin	8	0
Pinyon Jay*	29	4
Plumbeous Vireo	20	16
Red Crossbill*	19	12
Red-breasted Nuthatch	73	60
Red-eyed Vireo	3	0
Red-headed Woodpecker	20	21
Red-tailed Hawk	1	0
Red-winged Blackbird	18	8
Ring-necked Pheasant*	0	6
Rock Pigeon	6	31
Rock Wren*	32	11
Say's Phoebe	7	1
Spotted Towhee	43	57
Townsend's Solitaire	2	3
Tree Swallow	0	1
Turkey Vulture	34	40
Vesper Sparrow*	1	1
Violet-green Swallow	32	30
Warbling Vireo	0	1
Western Kingbird	7	0
Western Meadowlark*	72	85
Western Tanager	9	7
Western Wood-Pewee	76	84
White-breasted Nuthatch	20	29
White-crowned Sparrow	3	0
White-throated Swift	161	52
Wild Turkey	3	16
Wood Duck	0	2
Yellow Warbler	45	41
Yellow-rumped Warbler	43	26

For more bird data

Visit the Rocky Mountain Avian Data Center online:
<http://adc.birdconservancy.org>

Northern Great Plains Network

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Network Parks: Agate Fossil Beds NM • Badlands NP • Devils Tower NM • Fort Laramie NHS • Fort Union Trading Post NHS • Jewel Cave NM • Knife River Indian Villages NHS • Missouri NRR • Mount Rushmore NM • Niobrara NSR • Scotts Bluff NM • Theodore Roosevelt NP • Wind Cave NP