

Columbia Wetlands Waterbird Survey (CWWS) Update

There has been a lot going on!

Columbia Wetlands Waterbird Survey

Spring Survey results and updates

95 volunteers counted and identified birds this spring during the waterbird survey. There were relatively low counts this year when compared to the previous couple of years that had a comparable amount of survey effort. In total, **25,496 birds were counted over the three survey dates**. April 3rd had 8,344 individuals, April 10th had 8,491 and April 16th had 8,661 birds. It's not clear why counts were lower, but it could have had to do with the weather. To see the **summary checklist for the spring 2019 surveys**, please [click here](#).

If you are interested to see the total numbers of birds counted on each survey date between 2015-2019, please see the attachment called *CWWS_species_individuals_checklist_numbers 2015-2019*.

2. The CWWS project recently installed **10 waterfowl nesting boxes on private land** for eight different landowners in the Columbia Valley. They were mounted according to best management practices, on free standing poles with predator guards in place. The volunteer land owners are keen to monitor the occupancy and nest success of these boxes and maintain them over the long term. Thanks to these volunteers, the Windermere Rod and Gun Club who donated the boxes, and to the Columbia Basin Trust and Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund who provided funds to buy the posts, predator guards and mounting hardware. And thanks to John and Elliot who helped to install these boxes in the field!

3. On April 8th, 2019, we conducted our fourth annual **Aerial Swan Survey** in order to count trumpeter/tundra swans in the Columbia Wetlands. We counted **669 swans** from Canal Flats to Golden. For comparison, below are the previous swan survey counts:

March 23, 2016 - 644 individuals

March 26, 2017 - 621 individuals

April 9, 2018 - 915 individuals

4. In order to help us achieve Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) status, we have been paying more attention to the ospreys nesting in the valley this year. So far, we have detected **31 osprey nests, with 22 of those nests already occupied**. If you know of any osprey nests located between **Windermere, Fairmont, and Canal Flats**, please let us know, although we are aware of the one nest at the Columere marina.

5. On May 11th, we conducted a **waterbird survey on Columbia Lake**. This was done in order to get an idea on how many at-risk grebes (i.e. Horned/Eared/Western Grebes) utilize this lake during their migration period as these grebe sp. tend to travel through the Columbia Valley after the CWWS dates in April. We traveled 13.3 km by boat, surveyed for 2 hr 19 min and counted **36 Western Grebes, 38 Horned Grebes, 1 Eared Grebe, 1 Eared/Horned Grebe** (too far away to ID). To see the complete checklist, please [click here](#). Thank you Dave Rae for donating your time, boat and gas money take us around the lake! And thank you Mary McGovern for assisting on the survey!

6. Rachel has just a few spots left for people to join her on the marsh bird monitoring project this May and June. Please see the attached [poster](#) if you are interested.

Fall surveys dates are September 29, October 5th and 15th (10 am-1 pm). This will be the final survey dates of the CWWS!

We could not run this project without you. Thank you to our 2019 funders: Columbia Basin Trust, Regional District of East Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund, Columbia Shuswap Regional District Area A, Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners, Wings Over the Rockies, Vancouver Foundation – Steward Fund, and The McLean Foundation.

Thank you so much for your invaluable contributions to Wildsight Golden's Columbia Wetlands Waterbird Survey!

Sincerely,
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