

27th annual

Brooks-Lake Newell Bird Count May 15-17, 2026



Photo: Marsh Wren, Arthur Wieckowski

Lake Newell, Brooks and the surrounding area feature diverse prairie grassland plant life, irrigated farmlands, and many (255) species of birds such as Burrowing Owl, Black-necked Stilt, Grasshopper and Baird's Sparrow, Ferruginous Hawk, Long-billed Curlew, an abundance of spring warblers in riparian areas, and animals such as: Pronghorn Antelope, Prairie Rattlesnake, Great Plains Toad and many more.

All 2026 participants must pre-register.

To register contact: Debra Hornsby
debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com

Information about the count:
Donna Wieckowski
astolat@shaw.ca 403-870-6222



SCHEDULE

Friday, May 15

Register at hotel or set-up campsite at Tillebrook Park campground

6:30 pm: Pre-Count Potluck (**NEW!**) and Meeting: Heritage Inn Hotel, 1217 2 Street West, Brooks, AB. Be sure to be there! Bring your favourite potluck dish. Introduction to count and area species, assignment of count areas, distribute maps, meet fellow birders. BYOB.

Saturday, May 16

6:00 am: meet at Tillebrook park office for park bird walk, and/or disperse to count areas

7:00 pm: Social at Heritage Inn Hotel. Optional pizza dinner (user pay). BYOB. Deliver Saturday count totals (one list per zone team), discuss sightings, swap stories. Fun prizes! Assignment of Sunday count areas.

Sunday, May 17

6:00 am: meet at Tillebrook park headquarters for park bird walk, and/or disperse to count areas

6-7 pm: deliver Sunday count results (one list per zone team) to Tillebrook campsite B33 or email debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com Weather permitting, we will gather at Campsite #33 Sunday evenings to swap stories and sightings! BYOC – bring your own chair!

Note: a non-refundable fee of \$10 will be charged to each Brooks participant to cover Heritage Inn costs. Optional Saturday pizza is extra.

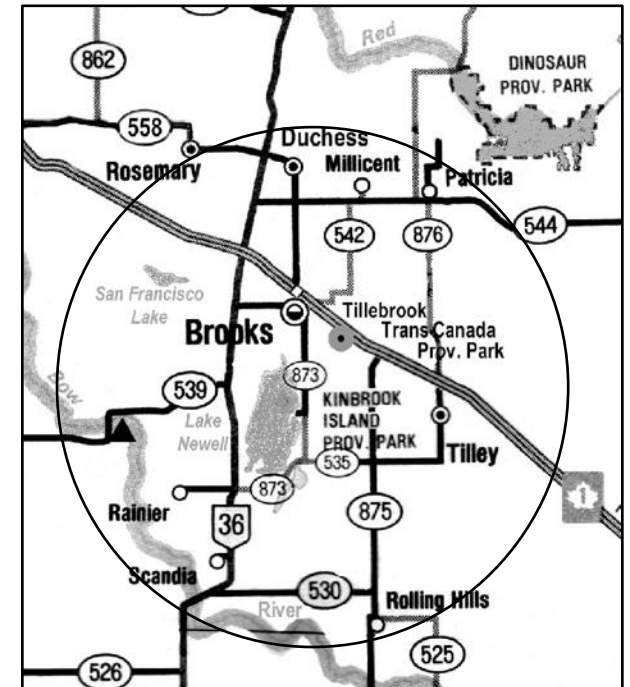
Travel Advisory

Many count areas are accessed via rough country roads. Spring conditions can make travel difficult. High-clearance or 4x4 vehicles are recommended. Count area maps provided are an **overview only**. We suggest having your own maps and/or GPS.

AREA ACCOMODATION

Tillebrook campsites can be booked through shop.albertaparks.ca, 1-877-537-2757. **General reservations for May 15-17 will open at 9 am on Saturday February 14.** A limited number of powered campsites have been reserved for count participants. You are responsible for booking your own campsite, well in advance. **The Heritage Inn is also offering a discount rate of \$127 + tax per night for count recipients.** For more information, email: debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com.

Hotels in Brooks include: Heritage Inn & Suites, Days Inn & Suites, Tel Star Motel, Travelodge, and Ramada. Other area campgrounds include: Brooks Kiwanis campground, Cobblestone RV Park, Kinbrook Island Provincial Park, and Rolling Hills Reservoir Campground.



Map: Randal Hoscheit

25th annual

Milk River Writing-on-Stone Bird Count May 22-24 2026



Photo: Long-billed Curlew Arthur Wieckowski

Grasslands, coulees and riparian areas meet in Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park (WOSPP), creating a great diversity of habitats for wildlife. Many species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals and over 160 bird species have been recorded within the park. We have counted 238 species of birds in the count area since 2001. The count area includes WOSPP; Crow Indian, Verdigris and Pakowki Lakes; Pinhorn provincial grazing reserve; Manyberries, Ketchum and Canal Creeks; and remote areas along the Milk River.

All 2026 participants must pre-register.

To register contact:

Debra Hornsby

debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com

Information about the count:

Donna Wieckowski

astolat@shaw.ca 403-870-6222

SCHEDULE

Friday, May 22

Register at motel or set-up campsite at Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park

6- 7 pm: Pre-count meeting. Location: WOSPP day-use kitchen shelter. Be sure to be there!

Introduction to count and area species, assignment of count areas, distribute maps, meet fellow birders. 7 pm: walk park trails

Saturday, May 23

6:00 am: meet in front of shower building for morning bird walk, and/or disperse to count areas

6-7 pm: deliver count results (one list per zone team) to Campsite #33 or email

debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com

Sunday, May 24

6:00 am: meet in front of shower building for morning bird walk, and/or disperse to count areas.

6-7 pm: deliver count results (one list per zone team) to Campsite #33 or email

debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com

Evening campfire gatherings: weather permitting, we will gather at Campsite #33

Saturday and Sunday evenings to swap stories and sightings and celebrate **25 years at WOS!** BYOC – bring your own chair!

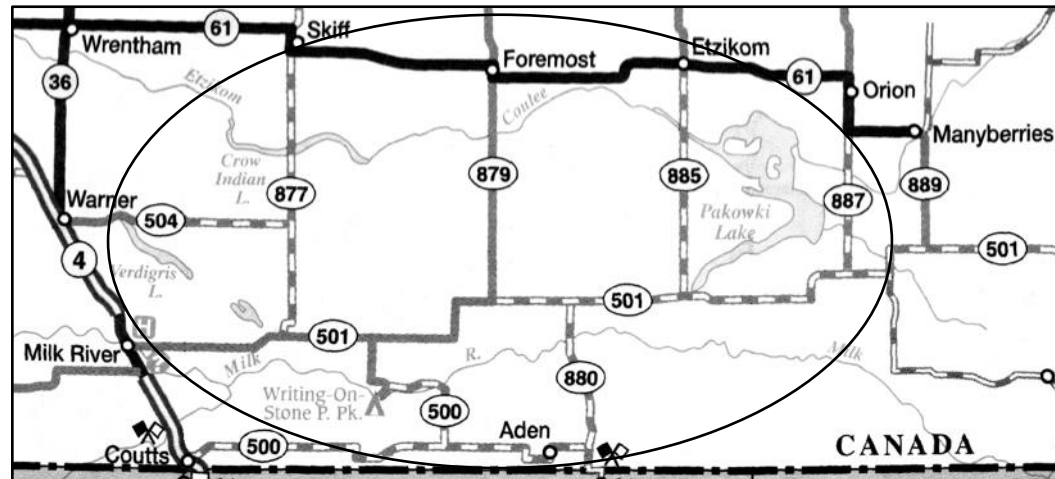
AREA ACCOMMODATION

Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park: Reservations: shop.albertaparks.ca, 1-877-537-2757. **General reservations for May 22-23 will open at 9 am on Saturday February 21.** You are responsible for booking your campsite, well in advance. For more information, email debra.hornsby.banff@gmail.com.

Hotel/motel options are limited. Possibilities include the Sandstone Motel in Milk River, and Double Tree Inn in Coutts. Area campgrounds include 8 Flags Campground in Milk River, and Gold Springs Park 4 km south of Milk River.

Travel Advisory

Many count areas are accessed via rough country roads. Spring conditions can make travel difficult. High-clearance or 4x4 vehicles are recommended. Count area maps provided are **an overview only**. We suggest having your own maps and/or GPS.



Map:
Randal Hoscheit