

2011

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NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT – Birds Are a Natural Resource That Anyone Can Monitor.

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I'm Roger Lawson, the Information & Education Coordinator for the Middle Republican Natural Resources District in Curtis, NE

- Pause – This is the Natural Resources Report...

Birds are everywhere year round and their presence both benefits our existence and enriches our daily lives. Who would not, for instance, pause at least a moment at the vision of a male Northern Cardinal perched at eye-level on a snow flocked evergreen?

In the absence of certain bird species, grasshoppers would certainly overtake crops and pastures. Caterpillars would defoliate deciduous trees during one summer. Birds, when closely monitored are a valuable environmental barometer. A declining species or bird population can alert us to a change in the environment.

Every year, between December 14th and January 5th, 50,000 observers around the Americas donate a day in the field to count birds within defined 15 mile diameter circles. This is the Christmas bird count, a citizen science program that began in 1900. Nebraska hosts about 10 Christmas Bird Counts across the state. The North Platte count is the nearest count to the Middle Republican NRD area. Birders and non-birders alike participate in Christmas Bird Counts. Last year, 105 species and over 300,000 birds were counted in the state. Last year, in the North Platte circle, counters found 63 species and 52,197 birds including 8 Bald Eagles, 1300 Canada Geese, 90 Robins and 100 Wild Turkeys.

Interested in counting birds or perhaps just viewing the results of past counts in the comfort of your armchair? Go to the National Audubon Society website

birds.audubon.org

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Thank you for listening. This is Roger Lawson, keeping you informed about your natural resources. Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future.