

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS AND MANITOBA FIRST NATION ENGAGEMENT FINAL REPORT



Submitted To:

NATURE MANITOBA

Submitted By:



MARCH 2017

Project Team:

Shianne McKay, Kate Cave, Kathy Johnson

Acknowledgements:

CIER would like to thank participating Manitoba First Nations for their interest in bird monitoring and conservation in Manitoba and Tim Poole, Manitoba IBA Program Coordinator, and Christian Artuso, Bird Studies Canada, Manitoba Program Manager for their guidance and support.

Cover photo credits: CIER**Copyright & Disclaimer**

© [2017] Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, including electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or other means without written permission of CIER.

CIER accepts no liability or responsibility for any damages that may be suffered or incurred by any third party as a result of the use of, reliance on, or any other decision made based upon this report.

CIER, the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, is a national First Nation directed environmental non-profit organisation. We offer research, advisory, and education and training services to Indigenous communities, governments and private companies through our two program areas: Building Sustainable Communities and Protecting Lands and Waters.

Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources

P.O. Box 26092 RPO Maryland

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 3R3

Tel: (204) 956-0660

E-mail: earth@yourcier.org

Web: www.yourcier.org

This document has been designed for double-sided printing and was originally printed on 100% post-consumer content process chlorine free (PCF) paper.

Table of Contents

1.0 PROJECT SUMMARY..... 2

2.0 INTRODUCTION..... 2

3.1 MANITOBA FIRST NATION ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TO DATE..... 3

3.2 Pine Creek First Nation (Sagemace and Coleman Islands IBA)..... 4

3.3 Canupawakpa Dakota Nation (Oak Lake and Plum Lakes IBA)..... 4

3.4 Birdtail Sioux First Nation (Proposed Grassland IBA)..... 4

3.5 Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (Netley-Libau Marsh IBA) 5

3.6 Peguis First Nation (Gull and Sandhill Island IBA, Kasakeemisekak Islands IBA, and Pipestone Rocks IBA) 5

3.7 Fisher River Cree Nation (Gull and Sandhill Island IBA, Kasakeemisekak Islands IBA, and Pipestone Rocks IBA)..... 5

4.1 CHALLENGES..... 5

4.2 First Nation Chief and Council Elections..... 5

4.3 Regional Southern Chiefs Organization Elections 6

4.4 Flood Meetings..... 6

5.0 KEY FINDINGS..... 6

6.0 NEXT STEPS: MOVING THE PROGRAM FORWARD 6

APPENDIX A: Nature Manitoba Outreach Material and IBA Maps for First Nations

1.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

In partnership with the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), Bird Studies Canada and Nature Manitoba and Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program (<https://importantbirdareasmb.ca/>) aimed to connect with select Manitoba First Nations from 19 First Nations in order to gauge communities' interest in participating in the Manitoba IBA Caretakers Program (<https://importantbirdareasmb.ca/volunteer/iba-site-caretakers/>). Information briefs and maps depicting Manitoba First Nation communities' location with respect to Important Bird Areas and information for specific avian species that are common to the area were developed and sent via email to 22 Manitoba First Nations. Follow up calls were conducted and interested communities were connected via email to Tim Poole, Manitoba Important Bird Areas coordinator and Christian Artuso, Bird Studies Canada Manitoba Program Manager. The following report provides a synopsis of the engagement process to date, discusses challenges, and highlights important findings and next steps.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Many Manitoban First Nations are concerned with how a changing climate and increases in man-made disturbances are impacting bird migrations, bird nesting habitats, and critical waterfowl habitat (marshlands/wetlands) near or adjacent to their communities. Many Elders, hunters, gatherers, and fishers are seeing changes in bird behavior and bird species variation from season to season, year to year.

During the course of this project, CIER was also involved in coordinating and facilitating a Manitoba First Nation Climate Change and Health Workshop. At the workshop, participants from 60 First Nations and First Nation organizations identified a need to increase capacity in their communities to engage in community based monitoring initiatives. As many of the First Nation participants were hunters and practice seasonal hunting of geese, wild turkeys, ducks, and small game birds, they identified concerns about bird migration patterns changing, the quality of marshlands in their areas, and the health of waterfowl. First Nations understand that the health and availability of the game birds are tied to the health of the waters and wetlands that sustain them. Protection and sustainable use of these areas is vital to First Nation culture and traditions.

3.1 MANITOBA FIRST NATION ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TO DATE

The following section discusses the progress to date on the Manitoba First Nation engagement process. First Nation communities were contacted in February 2017 and the project received immediate support with community meetings and visits scheduled into spring 2017.

The Important Bird Areas and Manitoba First Nations Engagement Project is showcased under CIER's current projects on our website. <http://www.yourcier.org/important-bird-areas-and-manitoba-first-nation-engagement.html>. Twenty two communities were contacted to become informed on the Manitoba IBA Caretakers Program and to gauge community interest in participating in the program to host spring and fall visits with Nature Manitoba and Bird Studies Canada staff for program information sessions, bird monitoring training, and site visits to collect data to contribute to the province wide database. The following communities (with their respective IBA locations) were contacted via email, sent information packages with maps, and follow up phone calls were attempted/conducted:

- Little Saskatchewan (Lake St. Martin IBA)
- Lake St. Martin (Lake St. Martin IBA)
- Pinaymootang First Nation (Lake St. Martin IBA)
- Opaskewayak Cree Nation (Saskatchewan River Delta IBA)
- Mosakahiken Cree Nation (Saskatchewan River Delta IBA)
- Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (Netley-Libau Marsh IBA)
- Chemawawin Cree Nation (Kaweenakumik Lake IBA and Gull Bay Spits IBA)
- Misipawistik First Nation (Kaweenakumik Lake IBA and Gull Bay Spits IBA)
- Ebb and Flow First Nation (Sand Reef Islands IBA and Kinosota/Leifur IBA)
- Lake Manitoba First Nation (Sand Reef Islands IBA)
- Fox Lake First Nation (Nelson River Estuary & Marsh Point IBA)
- Hallow Water First Nation (Kasakeemisekak Islands IBA)
- Pine Creek First Nation (Sagemace and Coleman Islands Bay IBA)
- Skownan First Nation (Long Island and Long Bay IBA)
- Rolling River First Nation (Proven Lake IBA)
- Sandy Bay First Nation (Sandy Bay Marshes IBA)
- Sapatawayak Cree Nation (Balabas Island IBA)
- Canupawakpa Dakota Nation (Oak Lake and Plum Lake IBA)

- Sioux Valley Dakota Nation (Oak Lake and Plum Lake IBA)
- Birdtail Sioux First Nation (Proposed Grassland IBA)
- Fisher River Cree Nation (Gull and Sandhill Island IBA, Kasakeemeemisekak Islands IBA, and Pipestone Rocks IBA)
- Peguis First Nation ((Gull and Sandhill Island IBA, Kasakeemeemisekak Islands IBA, and Pipestone Rocks IBA)

3.1 PINE CREEK FIRST NATION (SAGEMACE AND COLEMAN ISLANDS IBA)

Discussion on Manitoba IBA Program began in the fall of 2016, prior to the First Nations community elections and although Audrey Brass (Pine Creek First Nation) was temporarily relieved of her position with the band, she opted to continue communications and became involved in the IBA Program as a community volunteer. Discussions in the fall included community concerns regarding the impact that local hydro operations (Bipole 3) were having on bird species and habitat. Tim Poole and Christian Artuso were able to connect with Audrey and a community and site visit to Sagemace and Coleman Islands Bay IBA is planned for April 2017. Audrey plans to invite a local hunter to guide the group to provide the local context and history of bird species in the area.

3.2 CANUPAWAKPA DAKOTA NATION (OAK LAKE AND PLUM LAKES IBA)

Discussion with Canupawakpa Dakota Nation's Chief, Viola Eastman revealed a strong interest for community participation. Christian was able to connect with Viola and a visit to the community is scheduled for April 6, 2017 to discuss the Oaklake and Plum Lakes IBA.

3.3 BIRDTAIL SIOUX FIRST NATION (PROPOSED GRASSLAND IBA)

Viola Eastman has inquired on the possibility of Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation involvement in the Program. After review, Tim informed CIER that a new IBA is being considered for Birtle, Manitoba, which is adjacent to the community of Birdtail Sioux First Nation. Additional outreach materials were developed and CIER distributed materials to Viola Eastman to forward to Birdtail Sioux First Nation. Email attempts were unsuccessful, as Birdtail Sioux's internet service appears to be down. Viola recommended that the community be contacted in April 2017.

3.4 BROKENHEAD OJIBWAY NATION (NETLEY-LIBAU MARSH IBA)

A meeting was scheduled between Brokenhead Ojibway Nations (BON) land committee with a presentation from Tim and Christian on the IBA Program to inform on how BON can become involved in the program for March 23rd, 2017. This meeting has been rescheduled for April 13th, 2017. Initial community discussion with Gordon Bluesky, BON Land Manager involved questions on available resources (i.e., financial) for the community to participate.

3.5 PEGUIS FIRST NATION (GULL AND SANDHILL ISLAND IBA, KASAKEEMEEMISEKAK ISLANDS IBA, AND PIPESTONE ROCKS IBA)

Following email updates from Tim Poole that the IBA Program has received interest from the community of Fisher Branch, it was recommended by CIER that outreach be made to the nearby First Nation communities of Peguis and Fisher River Cree Nation. Additional outreach materials were developed and distributed to community contacts in Peguis.

3.6 FISHER RIVER CREE NATION (GULL AND SANDHILL ISLAND IBA, KASAKEEMEEMISEKAK ISLANDS IBA, AND PIPESTONE ROCKS IBA)

Additional outreach materials were developed and distributed to community contacts in Fisher River Cree Nation. Vince Crate, Fisher River Cree Nation Councillor reviewed materials and expressed interest in participating in the program. CIER connected Vince Crate and Chief and Council members to Tim and Christian to organize next steps for community engagement.

4.0 CHALLENGES

This project overcame a number of challenges including First Nation community elections, Regional Southern Chief Organization elections and community meetings emergency preparedness for Flood Meetings.

4.1 FIRST NATION CHIEF AND COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Many First Nation Chief and Councils in Manitoba follow a 2 year election term. This year 2016-17 was election time for many First Nation communities and posed unique challenges in community outreach since program involvement would need to be approved by the current Chief and Council. Many community band offices were difficult to connect with and requested that we contact them after elections. Given the nature of the IBA Program involvement aims to

conduct spring and fall visits to communities, it was decided to contact communities following community elections with outreach focused on Chief and Council executive offices.

4.2 REGIONAL SOUTHERN CHIEFS ORGANIZATION ELECTIONS

The Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO) represents 32 First Nations in Manitoba; approximately 90% of the communities on the project contact list. SCO hosted their elections on January 11, 2017. As with First Nation Chief and Council Elections, First Nations were contacted after the SCO elections.

4.3 FLOOD MEETINGS

Given the lack of response from a majority of southern First Nations, attempts were made to connect with Tribal Councils (TCs) - specifically the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council (IRTC), West Region Tribal Council (WRTC), and Dakota Ojibway Tribal Councils (DOTC). CIER asked the TCs to forward information to respective Chief and Council offices. However, through social media it was discovered that SCO, IRTC, and DOTC were preoccupied with assisting communities in Flood emergency preparedness meetings which would impact their availability to forward information to First Nations.

5.0 KEY FINDINGS

Projects such as this serve to assist First Nations in gathering sound scientific data on the availability of bird species in their backyards. This is an excellent opportunity to engage community members and youth on bird monitoring training, data collection and reporting research results. Mutual benefit is also achieved by providing data to a provincial wide data base that supports a National initiative, while at the same time supporting First Nations environmental management initiatives. As an example, participation with James Bay First Nations resulted in the protection of IBAs under a Band Council Resolution (BCR). A BCR is a document that is supported by Chief and Council and recognized under the law of the Canadian Government.

6.0 NEXT STEPS: MOVING THE PROGRAM FORWARD

There is a strong interest from First Nations in Manitoba to protect and conserve critical wildlife habitat to ensure cultural vitality and to conduct sustainable hunting practices. First Nations

often lack the internal capacity to engage in volunteer initiatives such as this and require financial support of a coordinator position to plan and carry out program activities. Resources (e.g., field guides, binoculars) would encourage more community involvement and the provision of funds towards Elder involvement, community wilderness guides (hunters, fishers) and transportation (e.g., ATV and boat rentals and fuel) would support the program team to conduct data collection in the respective IBAs.


Recommendations include continued outreach to First Nations speaking directly with community leadership and seeking program funding through community capacity building initiatives directed towards First Nations, such as the First Nation Youth Employment Program or Skills Link Program (<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033627/1100100033637>) and funds that are sourced from industry who have the potential to impact avian habitat through their operations such as Waniskatan Hydro Alliance (<http://www.hydroalliance.ca/funding/>).

APPENDIX ONE
NATURE MANITOBA OUTREACH MATERIAL AND IBA MAPS FOR
FIRST NATIONS


Oak Lake and Plum Lakes IBA

Oak Lake and Plum Lake are located in southwestern Manitoba, southwest of the Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation. The lake is surrounded by a vast that is fed by Pipestone Creek and drained by Plum Creek. There is a blend of rivers and streams, grasslands, deciduous woods, willow scrub, and rocky areas, along with cultivated agricultural lands. Grasses and sedges border the wetland, and remnants of undisturbed native prairie can be found. In keeping with its vast habitat diversity, this site hosts a large diversity of birds, during both the breeding season and fall migration.






Franklins Gull – over 30,000 pairs of birds, roughly equivalent to 8.6% of the estimated global population, have been recorded in this IBA.



Eared Grebes are colonial nesters feeding on fish in prairie marshes. 4.3% of their Canadian population breed in the IBA



Oak Lake is a critical staging post for migratory waterfowl such as this Tundra Swan (1.3% of the North American population passes through this IBA)



The native prairies in this IBA are critical habitat for threatened grassland birds such as this Sprague's Pipit

Image Landsat
14 U 381521.68 m E 5514952.46 m N elev 434 m

Saskatchewan River Delta IBA

This IBA is dominated by the Saskatchewan River Delta and contains both the mouth of the Saskatchewan River at Cedar Lake and the upper reaches of the river itself. Much of this site consists of flat, low-lying and very extensive wetlands, including huge stretches of marshes, sturgeon, which is of great value to the local aboriginal communities. This area is considered by some biologists to be the most important wetland in the province, in particular for breeding waterfowl.





The IBA has outstanding numbers of waterfowl. In 2016, nearly 30,000 waterfowl were counted in the Carrot Valley including 6,914 Northern Pintails



This is the most important place in Manitoba for breeding Red-necked Grebes



More than 1% of the global population of Tundra Swans were counted on passage migration during spring 2015






Other wetland birds such as Ring-billed Gulls are present in good numbers

Image Landsat
14 U 375334.59 m E 5968687.92 m N elev 1257 m

Balabas Island IBA

Balabas Island is located in Lake Winnipegosis, Manitoba. Salt Point is west of Balabas Island and Sapotaweyak Cree Nation is eastward, on the shore of Lake Winnipegosis. Lake Winnipegosis is a large (5,403 km²), shallow (max. depth ~50 m), freshwater lake with many islands. Deciduous and coniferous forests border the lake, with expanses of freshwater marsh found throughout the lakeshore. Balabas Island is one of the larger islands in this part of Lake Winnipegosis and is heavily forested. Some of these trees are dying.

A number of species of duck breed on this island, including this Red-breasted Merganser

Sapotaweyak Cree Nation

In June, 1999, a survey of Lake Winnipegosis islands recorded an estimated 8,000 Double-crested Cormorant nests on Balabas Island, more than 2% of this species global population.

Black-crowned night Herons are another breeding species recorded in the Balabas Island IBA

© 2016 Cnes/Spot Image
Image © 2016 DigitalGlobe

Imagery Date: 4/27/2015 14 U 385082.78 m E 5852102.03 m N elev 2

Proposed Grassland IBA



The Manitoba IBA Program intend to submit a formal proposal to have this area designated as an Important Bird Area. Currently this is focused on the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) sites at Spy Hill-Ellice and Ellice-Archie. The program would be interested in speaking to Birdtail Sioux First Nation and Gamblers First Nation about whether they would support inclusion of their lands in this proposal. The boundary below is not official but merely shows the extent of some of the best grassland habitats for birds.




The Chestnut-collared Longspur, a declining grassland species, is found in large concentrations breeding in this area

The native prairies are critical habitat for threatened grassland birds such as this Sprague's Pipit

© 2016 Google
Image Landsat / Copernicus

Gull and Sandhill Island IBA

Gull and Sandhill Island are located near the southern end of Lake Winnipeg's northern basin. 3,150 American White Pelican nests were recorded on Gull Island in 1998. Sandhill Island, which is located to the south, supports large numbers of Common Terns.

Kasakeemisekak Islands IBA and Pipestone Rocks IBA

Kasakeemisekak Islands IBA and Pipestone Rocks IBA are located along the eastern shore of Lake Winnipeg. Both these IBAs provide habitat for significant numbers of breeding American White Pelican

Riverton Sandy Bar IBA

The Riverton Sand Islands are located off the western shore of Lake Winnipeg near the community of Riverton (directly west of Hecla Island). This site supports significant concentrations of Ring-billed Gulls and Common Terns.

Other locations on map: Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation, Bloodvein, Fisher River, Peguis.

Coordinates: 14 U 628407.18 m E 5696619.24 m N elev 225 m

Lake St. Martin IBA

Lake St. Martin is located between Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg. Water from Lake Manitoba flows to Lake St. Martin via the Fairford River, and Lake St. Martin flows into Lake Winnipeg through the Dauphin River. Not much is known about the vegetation on the islands within the lake, but they are low-lying and likely far enough offshore to provide protection from predators. The surrounding shoreline of Lake St. Martin is generally flat and often marshy.

Common Tern – 3400 nests were counted here in 1991, representing nearly 1% of the North American population.

Caspian Tern – larger than the Common Tern, over 3% of the North American breeding population have nested on islands on Lake St. Martin.

American White Pelican - Lake St. Martin also provides nesting habitat for pelicans


Double-crested Cormorant – Up to 2414 nests have been counted here


Other locations on map: Dauphin River, Little Saskatchewan, Pinaymootang First Nation.

Coordinates: 14 U 541032.97 m E 5725291.10 m N elev 244 m


Sandy Bay Marshes IBA

The Sandy Bay marshes are located along the west shore of Lake Manitoba, and extend from east of the town of Amaranth southward for almost 25 km to Big Point. The marshes are within three distinct basins that are relatively well protected from the strong winds of the south basin of Lake Manitoba by barrier beaches. There are channels of water that connect the sheltered marshes to the main body of the lake.






This location has a long history of utilization by Western Grebes. In 1979, 300 adults were surveyed during the breeding season. In 1986, 500 to 1,000 nests of this species were recorded. In 1998, large congregations of 1,000 to 1,500 adults were observed in June and July. Many of these birds subsequently had young.



500 Black-bellied Plover, a species which breeds in the Arctic, were counted here in 2016.



The marsh provides breeding habitat for wetland birds like this Black Tern

Proven Lake IBA

Proven Lake Wildlife Management Area is located in southcentral Manitoba, south of Riding Mountain National Park, north of Rolling River and near the town of Erickson. The lake, which contains a few wooded islands, is shallow with a predominantly peat bottom. It has extensive beds of the invasive reed Phragmites, which often extend as much as 3 metres above the water level. The rolling lands that surround the lake are used for a variety of purposes, from cultivation for cereal grain and canola production, to cattle ranching. There are also large patches of aspen woods nearby.





Black-crowned Night Herons have a history of usage of the site. In a 1966 survey, over 300 nests were observed, while 200 nests were reported almost 30 years later in 1995. This colony represents 4% of the estimated Canadian population for this species.



Eared Grebe – 150 nests recorded in 1996



Franklin's Gull – 800 nests found in 1966

Image © 2016 DigitalGlobe
© 2016 Cnes/Spot Image
Imagery Date: 8/25/2015 14 U 431017.37 m E 5599550.17 m N elev 61

Netley-Libau Marsh IBA

Netley-Libau Marsh is situated at the south end of Lake Winnipeg, where the Red River branches several times and empties into the lake. Wave action on Lake Winnipeg, particularly due to strong wind-assisted tides, has produced a small beach ridge at the lakes south end, which acts as a barrier separating parts of Netley-Libau Marsh from the lake. The Red River is an important force of change in the large network of wetlands found here. Due to its history of frequent flooding, the route of the main channel of the river has changed numerous times. The area is very flat, and consists of many small bodies of water connected by channels and is interlaced with fingers of grassland, trees and shrubs.



Brokenhead First Nation



Netley-Libau Marsh is best known for its tremendous concentrations of southward-migrating birds. Numbers of geese and ducks on some occasions exceed 100,000 during fall migration.



125 pairs of Western Grebe and 100 pairs of Eared Grebe have been counted in the marsh. At least 12 species of duck breed here.



Red-winged and Yellow-headed blackbirds congregate here in late autumn in numbers exceeding 100,000



Franklin's Gull – over 4,500 pairs representing, almost 1% of the global population, have been recorded in this IBA.

Image © 2016 DigitalGlobe
Image Landsat
Imagery Date: 8/24/2015 14 U 658100.01 m E 5578759.33 m N elev 218 m eye

Balabas Island IBA

Balabas Island is located in Lake Winnipegosis, Manitoba. Salt Point is west of Balabas Island and Dawson Bay Indian Reserve is eastward, on the shore of Lake Winnipegosis. Lake Winnipegosis is a large (5,403 km²), shallow (max. depth ~50 m), freshwater lake with many islands. Deciduous and coniferous forests border the lake, with expanses of freshwater marsh found throughout the lakeshore. Balabas Island is one of the larger islands in this part of Lake Winnipegosis and is heavily forested. Some of these trees are dying.



Sapotaweyak Cree Nation



In June, 1999, a survey of Lake Winnipegosis islands recorded an estimated 8,000 Double-crested Cormorant nests on Balabas Island, more than 2% of this species global population.

A number of species of duck breed on this island, including this Red-breasted Merganser





Black-crowned night Herons are another breeding species recorded in the Balabas Island IBA

© 2016 Cnes/Spot Image
Image © 2016 DigitalGlobe
Imagery Date: 4/27/2015 14 U 385082.78 m E 5852102.03 m N elev 2

Long Island and Long Island Bay IBA

Long Island and Long Island Bay are located in the southeast portion of the southern section of Lake Winnipegosis. The closest major town is Winnipegosis to the west-southwest. Long Island is a very low-lying, grassy island, that is partly rocky and is surrounded by marshes. The island is very close to the east shore and is located within Long Island Bay.

Skownan First Nation





This IBA is most well-known as a significant staging area for migrating and molting diving ducks. In 1977, 60,000 Redheads were counted in the IBA, representing over 10% of the global population.



The island provides nesting habitat for over 100 pairs of American White Pelican



In 1991, 2,324 nests of Double-crested Cormorants were recorded on the island. This represents over 1% of the interior population of this species.

© 2016 Cnes/Spot Image © 2016 DigitalGlobe

Sand Reef Islands IBA

Ebb and Flow



Kinosota/Leifur is known for its large population of Red-headed Woodpeckers, a species listed as globally Near-threatened. At least 100 birds are estimated to be present, which corresponds to 3% of the Canadian population. They prefer sparse woodlands and overgrazed pastures with large amounts of dead and dying trees

The Kinosota-Leifur area is located on the west side of Lake Manitoba from Leifur to Kinosota, about 20 km north of the town of Amaranth. The area mainly consists of deciduous woodlands (mostly poplar) interspersed with pastureland and hayland, but it also contains small areas of wetland. The site begins near the Lake Manitoba shoreline where the Kinosota Ridge occurs and continues westward through farmland and woods.

The Sand Reef Islands on Lake Manitoba are extremely low-lying with a limited amount of relief and consequently they are subjected to flooding during periods of high water and heavy winds.

Lake Manitoba

These islands are home to 3% of North America's Caspian Terns (1,000 nests). In addition, in 1986, 300 Common Tern nests, 750 Ring-billed Gull nests, 250 Double-crested Cormorant nests, and 220 American White Pelican nests were counted on the islands.





Image Landsat

Kinosota/Leifur IBA

Sagemace and Coleman Islands Bay IBA

Sagemace Bay is located in the southern portion of Lake Winnipegosis, Manitoba, north of the community of Camperville and south of Winnipegosis. This site includes all the islands in the Sagemace and Coleman Bays. Deciduous and coniferous forests border Lake Winnipegosis while large expanses of freshwater marsh occur along the lake. The surrounding forests are home to many mammals, including Black Bear and White-tailed Deer.

Pine Creek





Sugar Island, in Sagemace Bay, supports nationally significant numbers of breeding Great Blue Herons. This Great Blue Heron colony has been existence for at least three decades. A 1986 survey found 300 nests on Sugar Island, which is almost 1% of this species Canadian population. .



This IBA is most well-known as a significant staging area for migrating and molting diving ducks like these Redheads.



Large numbers of Double-crested Cormorants also breed on the Sagemace and Coleman Bay islands. In 1986, 975 nests were found.

14 U 430568.96 m E 5758827.32 m N elev 253 m

Kaweenakumik Lake IBA

Misipawistik First Nation
Chemawawin Cree Nation

An Ecological Reserve, Kaweenakumik Lake is a freshwater lake with several islands of varying shapes located in its southern half. Some of the islands are small, rugged and rocky and devoid of vegetation, while others are large with substantial tree and shrub cover. The islands are important calving sites for Caribou. These islands contain impressive colonies of colonially nesting birds.




This IBA includes one of the largest congregations of breeding American White Pelicans in Canada, about 5% of the global population

At least 1,000 pairs of Common Terns (roughly 1% of the estimated North American population) were estimated to breed on the islands in the 1980s. 20,000 pairs of Ring-billed Gull bred here in the 1980's. This is also the southernmost area for breeding White-winged Scoter.



Gull Bay Spits IBA

The Gull Bay Spits, are attached to the south side of Long Point, at its extreme southwest corner, and they extend out into the Gull Bay portion of Lake Winnipeg. There are two spits in total, the north spit and the south spit. The base of the north spit has been covered in water, thereby creating an island.



The Gull Bay Spits have hosted breeding Piping Plovers, an endangered species in Canada. 38 Piping Plovers were recorded in 1991 and in 1996, 17 birds were detected. It also provides habitat for migrating gulls and waterfowl.

14 U 481253.94 m E 58637



Kasakeememisekak Islands IBA

Kasakeememisekak Islands IBA are located along the eastern shore of Lake Winnipeg. Some of the islands are small, rugged and rocky and devoid of vegetation, while others are large with substantial tree and shrub cover. These islands provide habitat for impressive numbers of colonially nesting birds.

At least 500 pairs of American White Pelicans nested on the Pipestone Rocks in 1997.

Large concentrations of other colonially nesting birds also breed on these rocks.

The Pipestone Rocks are a group of small islands located near the northern edge of the Hecla / Grindstone Provincial Park. The islands, which are comprised of granite rock, are devoid of trees and shrubs. The water level around the island can change greatly due to wind tides. They also fluctuate greatly from year to year, changing the size and shape of the islands which may disappear completely during high water years.

Hollow Water
More than 1% of the estimated global breeding population of American White Pelicans (>1,800 birds) were recorded at Kasakeememisekak Islands IBA in 2012.

Pipestone Rocks IBA

Imagery Date: 4/25/2011 14 U 683302.59 m E 5682972.02 m N elev 231 m eye



Dog Lake IBA

The Dog Lake area is located in the interlake region of central Manitoba, immediately to the east of the narrows of Lake Manitoba. Dog Lake contains numerous low islands that are frequented by colonial waterbirds. The shores are rocky and irregular in shape with numerous shallow bays which provide habitat for migratory shorebirds. This is also an important site for migrating waterfowl.

Both Dog Lake and Duck Islands IBA are critical for American White Pelicans. Approximately 5% of the global population was recorded on Dog Lake in 1986 and over 1000 individuals have been counted on Duck Islands IBA. These IBAs are also important for Double-crested Cormorants.

Duck Islands IBA

Duck Island is located in the northeastern corner of the southern basin of Lake Manitoba. This IBA includes Duck Island (also known as Big Birch Island) and several smaller unnamed neighbouring islands.

Dog Lake IBA is an important area for nesting herons such as this Great Egret.

In 1996, a total of 990 Common Tern nests and 5,100 Ring-billed Gull nests were counted on Dog Lake.

Imagery Date: 5/8/2014 14 U 559180.39 m E 5648674.24 m N

Nelson River Estuary & Marsh Point IBA

The Nelson River empties into western Hudson Bay about 150 km downstream from Gillam. Marsh Point protrudes into Hudson Bay between the outlets of the Nelson River on the west and the Hayes River on the east. The substrate of this area consists of fine sand and gravel deposits. The land between the estuaries of these two rivers is known as Marsh Point and is extremely flat. It contains extensive tracts of grasses and willows interspersed with many bogs and small clumps of Black Spruce. The land behind the Nelson River estuary is boggy and has extensive expanses of stunted spruce. The gently sloping tidal flats receive tides that reach four metres.



Over 1,000 Black Scoters have been recorded along the shores of the IBA in spring.



In the fall, this site supports congregations of North American Ruddy Turnstones, with 600 or more being reported in one day.



Other species of shorebirds found at this site in the fall include Semipalmated Sandpiper (1,000), Dunlin (400), and Least Sandpiper (650).

Fox Lake

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO