



SPOTLIGHT ON ALBERTA

Although it is the westernmost of Canada's prairie provinces, southwestern Alberta claims a chunk of the Rocky Mountains, including some of the most spectacular scenery in North America: Jasper and Banff national parks. Farther east in Alberta is prairie and agricultural lands, and north is boreal forest and muskeg. Canada's fourth-largest province, Alberta is slightly smaller than Texas. The landlocked province has a predominantly humid continental climate, with warm summers and cold winters. Its capital, Edmonton (famous for its wintertime gyrfalcons), is geographically centered, and its largest city, Calgary, is farther south, but both metropolitan areas boast populations of more than a million

people. Central and northern Alberta are the breeding grounds of countless waterfowl and other migratory birds. Best birding is in the low-lying wetlands and reservoirs. Wood Buffalo National Park, nesting area for the western population of whooping cranes, occupies Alberta's northeast corner, but is too remote for most birders.

Hotspots

1. Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, Calgary
2. Elk Island National Park
3. Beaverhill Bird Observatory
4. Cypress Hills Provincial Park
5. Glenmore Reservoir, Calgary
6. Waterton Lakes National Park
7. Wyndham-Carseland Provincial Park

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Maligne Lake in Jasper National Park.



- 8. Weaselhead Natural Area, Calgary
- 9. Irricana Sloughs
- 10. Kinbrook Island Provincial Park

Must-see birds:

- Trumpeter and tundra swans
- Barrow's goldeneye
- Gray partridge
- Ruffed grouse
- White-tailed ptarmigan
- Sharp-tailed grouse
- Marbled godwit
- Franklin's gull
- Northern goshawk
- Snowy owl
- Northern hawk-owl
- Northern pygmy-owl
- American three-toed woodpecker
- Northern shrike
- Boreal chickadee

- American and Sprague's pipits
- Pine grosbeak
- Common and hoary redpolls
- Red and white-winged crossbills,
- Lapland and chestnut-collared longspurs
- Snow bunting

Resources:

Nature Calgary's Birding Locations: naturecalgary.com/birding/birding-locations
 Birds Calgary blog: birdscalgary.com
 Alberta bird checklist: tinyurl.com/Alberta-bird-list
 Edmonton Nature Club: edmontonnatureclub.org/birding
 Travel Alberta: travelalberta.com 🗺️



Marbled godwit.



Barrow's goldeneye.



Hoary redpoll.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Northern hawk-owl.



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