

Bird Field Note
Winter Shrubby Draw Surveys
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In the winter, we visit each shrubby draw three consecutive days. This sampling method allows us to identify which areas see repeated use by birds behaving nomadically. American Tree Sparrows outnumbered all other species (Table 1).

Table 1. Species using shrubby draws from 1/5-1/7/2015.

	Partridge Ally			Tongue Creek			Sheep Camp			Total
Species	1/5	1/6	1/7	1/5	1/6	1/7	1/5	1/6	1/7	
American Tree Sparrow		3	8	50	24	32	17	17	12	163
Gray Partridge				11	8	3				22
Black-billed Magpie	2		1	2	3	4	3		3	18
House Finch							1		11	12
Black-capped Chickadee							3		6	9
Red-breasted Nuthatch							2	2	3	7
Song Sparrow	1	1			2		1	1	1	7
Northern Shrike		1	1	1			1			4
Dark-eyed Junco	1							1	1	3
Northern Flicker				1			1			2
Common Raven						1				1
Downy Woodpecker									1	1
Horned Lark	1									1
Mourning Dove									1	1
Prairie Falcon									1	1
Red Crossbill								1		1
Unknown Bird									1	1
Wilson’s Snipe					1					1
	5	5	10	65	38	40	29	22	41	255



Similar to our fall and spring draw surveys, we saw most winter bird activity clustered in areas with woody vegetation (Figure 1). For several species, we saw repeated use of areas across the three days of our surveys, including Gray Partridges in lower Tongue Creek, American Tree Sparrows in middle Tongue Creek, and Red-Breasted Nuthatches in upper Sheep Camp.

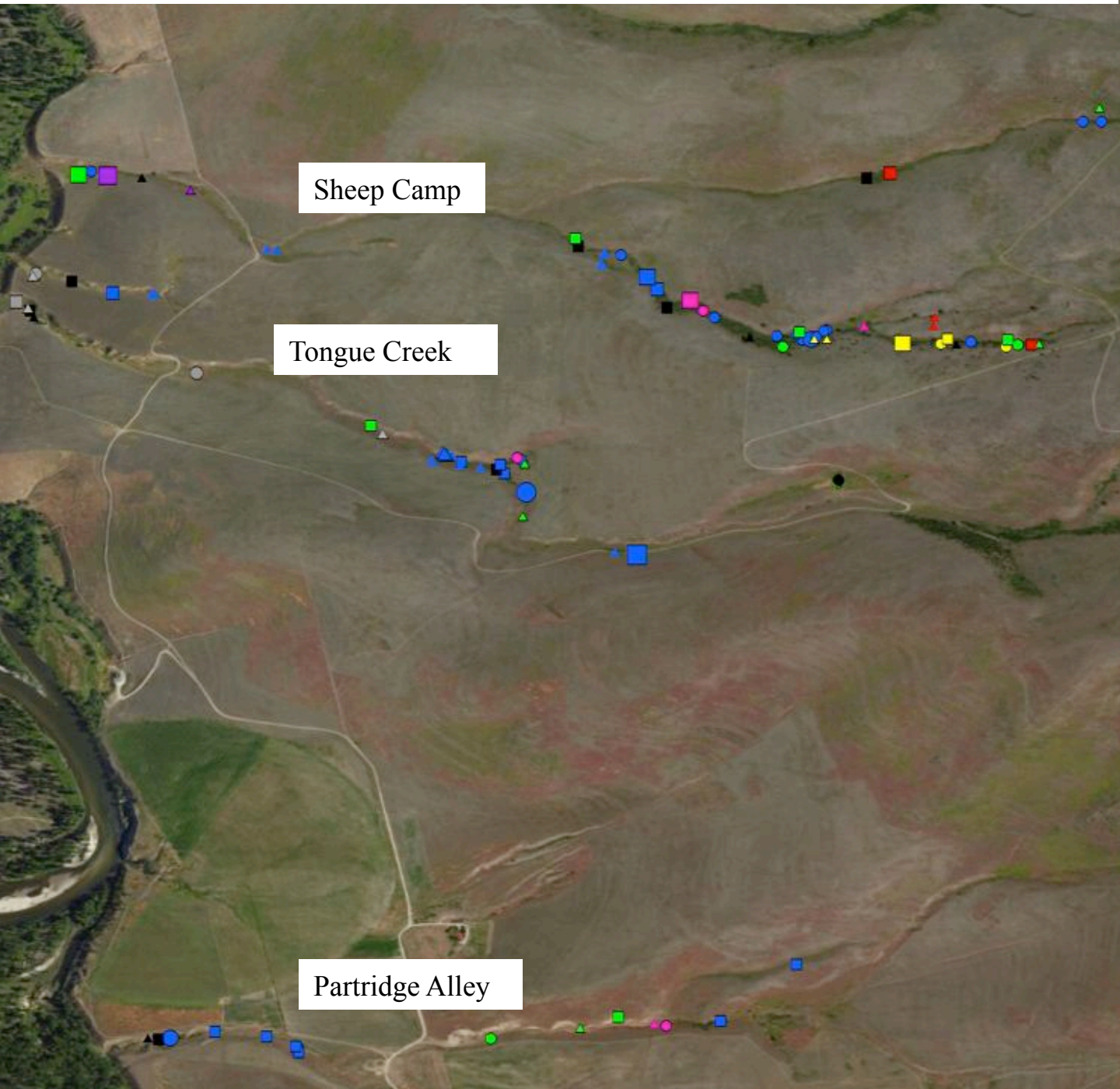


Figure 1. Bird occurrence in shrubby draws, 1/5-1/7/2015. Observations are color-coded by species (American Tree Sparrow, Gray Partridge, Black-billed Magpie, House Finch, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Song Sparrow, species with < 5 detections) and shape-coded by date (1/5 Δ, 1/6 ○, 1/7 ■). Larger icons denote more than one individual detected in an area (range 1-23).

Unlike most other species, Gray Partridges showed no associations with woody vegetation. Their snow burrows dotted the sides of sparse draws.



I caught one partridge out in the snow, and another peeking out of its snow cave.



A long pink tail hung out of the mouth of this Northern Shrike.



A juvenile shrike shows more brown and mottled colors than the adult.



The south-facing slopes await flocks of Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings.

