

Volunteer Policy

Last Mountain Bird Observatory (LMBO)

May 2019

Who may volunteer? All volunteers are welcome at Last Mountain Bird Observatory. Opportunities to learn about the many aspects of bird migration are available to persons with all levels of experience. While drop-in volunteers are often accepted, we ask that volunteers contact the observatory and register prior to volunteering (see below for contact information). Registered volunteers will be given priority over drop-in volunteers when it comes to participation in station activities.

How long may I volunteer for? In order to allow for all volunteers to experience banding, volunteers will be limited to stints of up to one week per month. In order to gain enough experience and learn the techniques of bird banding we ask volunteers to arrive at the station at 7am and stay until net closing at 1:30pm. LMBO is open from May 6th to 31st in the spring and August and September in the fall.

Are volunteers reimbursed for their expenses? Nature Saskatchewan (NS) does not reimburse registered volunteers for costs during their stay at LMBO, but will provide volunteers with a tax receipt for the donation of expenses. To receive a tax receipt, the volunteer must submit his/her expenses together with an attached donation cheque for at least the amount of the expenses being claimed. NS will provide a cheque in the amount of the expense claim together with a tax receipt in the amount of the donation cheque.
****This policy extends to LMBO related programs including CBC, BBS and SNOS.**

Camping sites for volunteers:

Last Mountain Regional Park (web-site below) has a full range of services for campers. The observatory has a refrigerator that may be used for storage of perishables.

IMPORTANT: Check the weather at Last Mountain Lake (website below) before you leave for the Observatory. If it is raining, if the winds are over 30 kph, or if it is over 30 degrees Celsius at 7:00 a.m., the nets will not be opened. Likewise, the nets will be closed if these conditions arise over the next six hours.

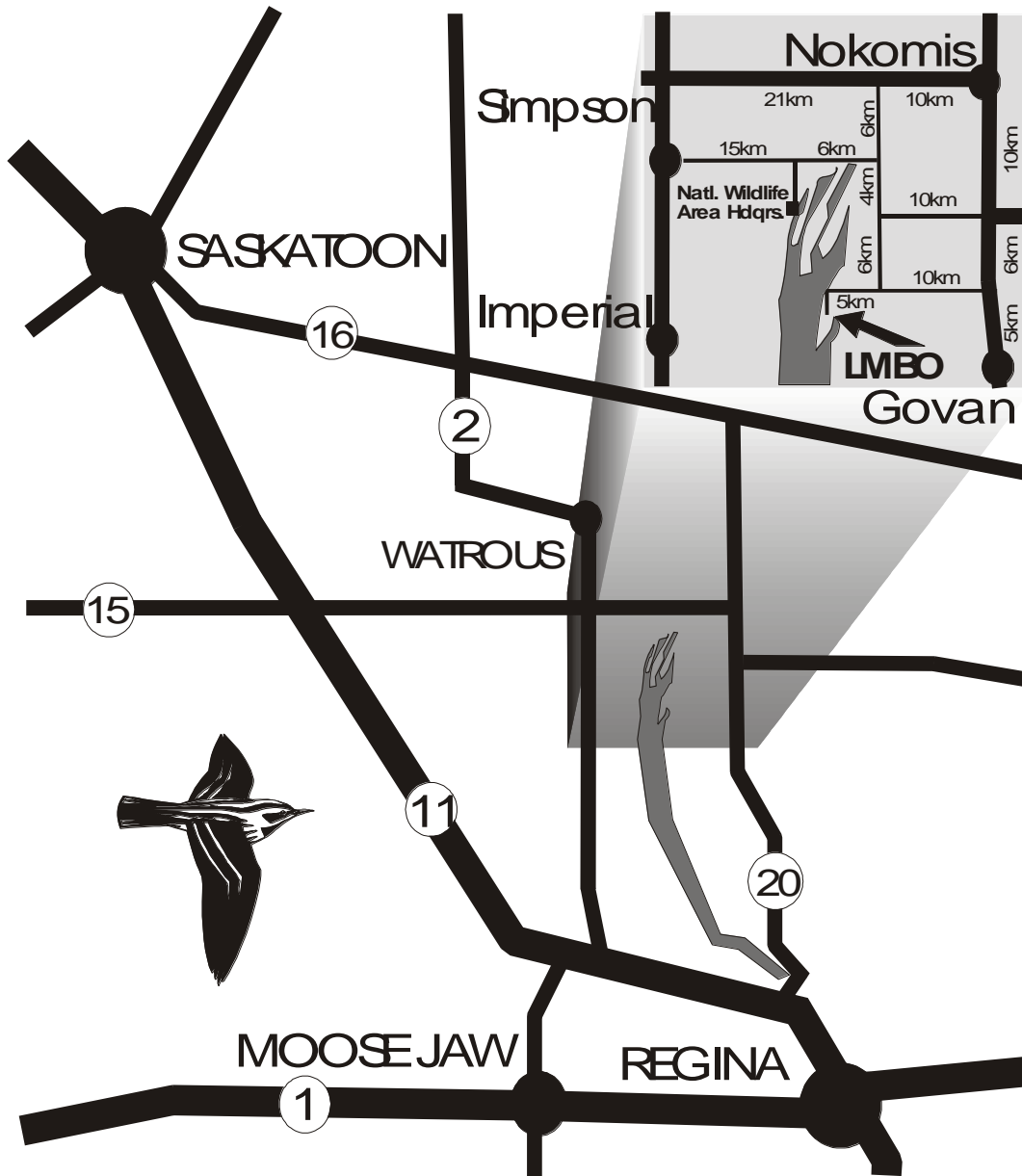
<http://www.campsource.ca/parks/default.aspx?parkid=2357>
http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/city/pages/sk-35_metric_e.html

Contacts:

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www.naturesask.ca

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Figure 1. Location of Last Mountain Bird Observatory (With enlarged LMBO site map)



Instructions for volunteers at Last Mountain Bird Observatory

Welcome to Last Mountain Bird Observatory (LMBO). Thank you for taking the time to volunteer with us! This handout is designed to outline some of the ‘do’s and don’t’s’ for volunteers. Please note that the **Bander in Charge (BIC)** directs all activities at the Observatory. As some protocols and procedures at LMBO are different from those of other observatories, the BIC must be consulted regarding all procedures. At LMBO, banding and census activities are conducted by paid personnel or by volunteers who have previous experience at a bird observatory. The less trained volunteer can participate in a number of other activities including scribing, net monitoring and data entry. **Please note: Volunteers will only band birds once the BIC has decided they have gained sufficient training to do so. Volunteers should not expect to band birds on their first visit without having prior experience handling wild birds. If it is a particularly busy day for birds (>100), the BIC will not have time to train volunteers.**

Scribes

Scribes are those people who record the information dictated by the bander. It is the scribe’s duty to ensure that the bander notes and conveys to the scribe all the information to be entered on the field banding sheets. **The scribe must ensure that the bander applies a band and that the band matches the sequence of bands on the field sheet.** Further specific instructions are listed **at the top of each field banding sheet.**

Net Monitors

Net monitors are those people who have the task of monitoring the mist nets and removing birds as they are encountered. **Anyone removing birds from mist nets should be thoroughly trained in the procedure before attempting even the easiest of extractions.** Birds may be injured by untrained personnel. The general description of the removal techniques is described in the “A manual for monitoring bird migration - Last Mountain Bird Observatory”.

For those of you who have experience in extractions, here are a few things to remember:

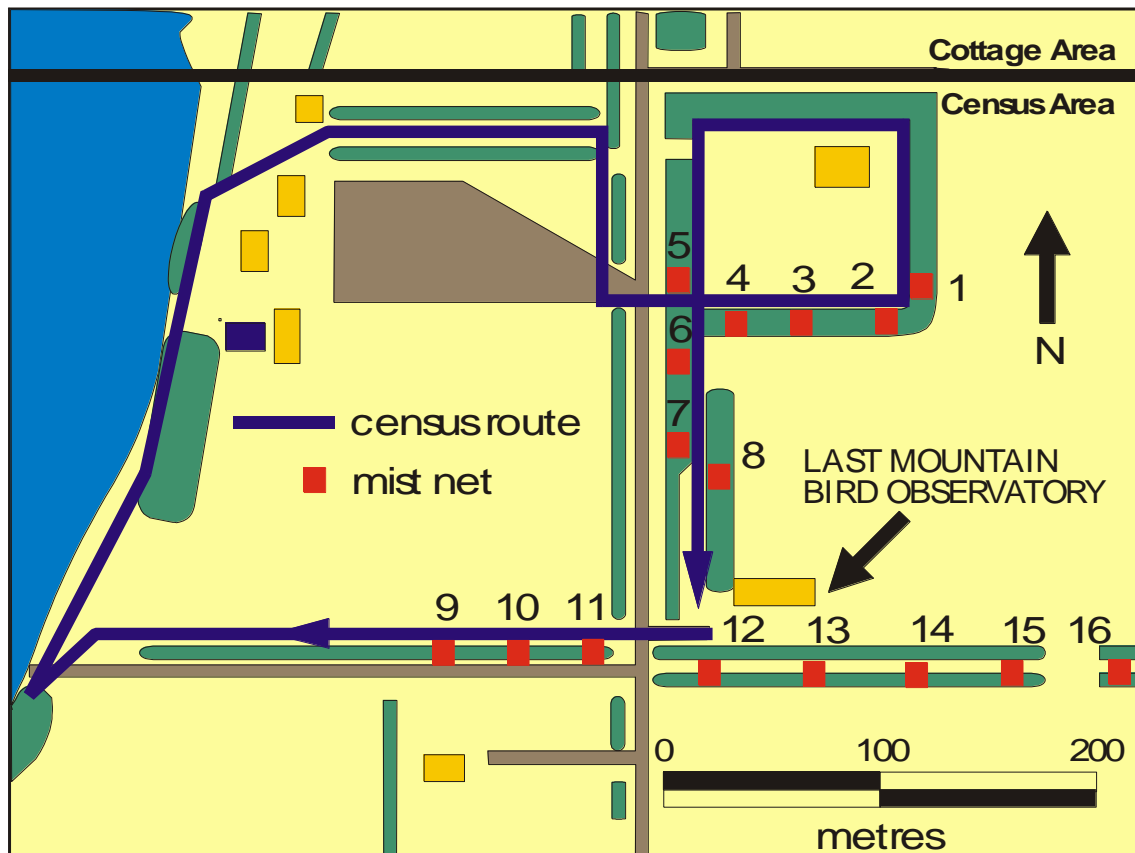
1. Note the net from which you extract each bird. At first you may have to consult the map below but as you become more familiar with the net layout you will remember the nets from which you removed each bird. Unless you are volunteering after September 20, you will note that there are **no Nets 9, 10 or 11.** These are set up only after that date.
2. If you have trouble removing a bird from a net, you may have to get the Bander in Charge to complete the extraction. In general, if you have been unable to remove a bird in **one minute** you should get help from a more experienced bander. **In rare cases** it may be necessary to cut the net to remove the bird.

3. **Please inform the bander of any injured or previously banded birds.** Injured birds require immediate attention, while the knowledge of a previously banded bird helps to prevent double banding.

Data entry

Two types of data are entered at LMBO: Combined Daily Total (CDT) and Banding. We have manuals and there is online help for both these programs. Consult the BIC if you wish to help in entering CDT and banding data.

Figure 2. Map of Last Mountain Regional Park showing location of Mist Nets and Census Route.



West Nile Virus – Field Precautions

*See the Website www.westnilevirus.gc.ca for detailed information.