Eagle-Eye Tours

Manitoba Owls Trip Report (Mar 14 - 18, 2026)

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Day 1 – March 14th We met the group in the hotel lobby in the evening, where introductions were made. From there we walked over to Oak and Grain for an enjoyable dinner where we got to know everyone and went over the itinerary for the trip.

Manitoba Owls tour group © Julie Akina

Following dinner, we had a presentation from Jim Duncan who was joined by his Great Grey Owl, Oska. Jim talked about his work with the species discussing his research and conservation work.

Day 2 – March 15th

The day started with a drive to the town of Oak Bluff where there had been reports of Snowy Owls from previous groups. From Oak Bluff we continued east towards Fannystelle spotting numerous Horned Larks along the way. Just outside of Fannystelle we found our first owl of the trip, a Snowy Owl perched on a small hill. Everyone had great views before we carried on along the gravel roads where there were an abundancy of Horned Larks and a lone Snow Bunting.

Snowy Owl © Walker Giesbrecht

After more hunting we located our second Snowy Owl. This was a striking, nearly all white bird that gave us great looks as it perched on a post. From here we continued moving east passing through Sanford and Domain finding a third Snowy Owl along the highway along with many more Horned Larks.

Snowy Owl © Mitch Doucet

Heading back towards Winnipeg, we made a stop near FortWhyte to check on a Bald Eagle nest. Although the nest appeared unoccupied at the time the group still enjoyed the view of the large nest. We then made our way over to St. Vital Park where we checked the roost of a Western Screech-Owl. While the owl was not present, we were rewarded with a great sighting of a Pileated Woodpecker. Lunch was enjoyed at a nearby indoor picnic area which offered a break from the cold weather.

Pileated Woodpecker © David Giliotti

With our bellies full we moved on to Harris Park where a Barred Owl had been reported previously.

Despite a good search of the area, we were unable to locate it. From Harris Park we drove to the north end of the city where we visited a pair of nesting Great Horned Owls along Bunn's Creek. The female was on the nest but with the cold weather the chicks were tucked away. The male was seen in a surrounding tree keeping an eye on everyone.

Great Horned Owl © Julie Akina

Our final stop of the day was Assiniboine Park where we searched for a Northern Saw-whet Owl that had been previously reported in the area. After some searching the small owl was located tucked tightly against the truck of a conifer fast asleep. Everyone enjoyed the excellent views of the owl.

Northern Saw-whet Owl © Bruce Moorman

Birding in Manitoba © Julie Akina

We returned to the hotel after a successful day and wrapped things up with dinner at Chicago Joe’s.

Day 3 – March 16th

After breakfast, we started our birding along highway 317, where it didn’t take long to get our target specie for the day, a Northern Hawk Owl. This cooperative individual had been seen by previous tours and was located high up in a tree enjoying the sunny day.

Northern Hawk Owl © David Giliotti

Birding in Manitoba © Mitch Doucet

Moving on we drove through Lac du Bonnet and made our way to Henry Bellin Road to visit a series of feeders. Along the way we stopped at a house where a group of Sharp-tailed Grouse were present. At the feeders we got good looks at Evening Grosbeaks, Black-capped Chickadees, Redpolls, and Blue Jays.

Evening Grosbeak © Walker Giesbrecht

With everyone frozen from the cold weather we continued back to where we saw the Northern Hawk Owl getting more looks at it before driving up Maple Creek Road. Our next stop was some open water near Powerview that didn't produce anything. With a good morning of birds, we stopped at Papertown Motor Inn for Lunch.

Northern Hawk Owl © Mitch Doucet

After lunch we made our way up Maskwa Road and continued south to Lac du Bonnet where we drove up Wendigo Road. After a quiet afternoon we made our way back to the city ending the day with a delicious dinner.

Day 4 – March 17th

After some talking with the group the previous evening, we decided to adjust our plan and spend our final full day birding closer to the city. After a later start and breakfast, we returned to the Oak Bluff region to once again search for more Snowy Owls. From Oak Bluff we traveled along highway 330 where we drove south passing through La Salle and towards Domain where the action picked up. We quickly located our first Snowy Owl of the day perched atop a post. After passing through Domain, we located an additional three Snowy Owls perched on posts or piles of railway ties. All owls provided excellent viewing and photography opportunities. From here we continued to Rosenort adding another two Snowy Owls to our days tally.

Snowy Owl © Allan Martin

Snowy Owl © Mitch Doucet

In Rosenort we encountered a group of Grey Partridge which offered close and prolonged looks before we began our return towards Winnipeg. Back in the city, we made a quick stop at Maple Grove Park where open water held a Hooded Merganser along with numerous Mallards. We then headed to FortWhyte where we enjoyed another great lunch.

Birding in Manitoba © Julie Akina

In the afternoon we drove north to Oak Hammock Marsh. Wind and snow made birding conditions challenging, but we spent time inside the interpretive center learning about the marsh and its importance to migratory birds. A set of feeders provided good views of Redpolls, Downy Woodpeckers, and two female Red-winged Blackbirds.

Redpoll © Martin Hasha

With everyone happy and satisfied with our birds for the trip we had our final dinner together at Oak and Grain Restaurant celebrating a successful and memorable trip.

Day 5 – March 18th

After a fantastic trip, full of great memories and great birds, everyone headed home.

Manitoba Owls tour group 2026 © Mitch Doucet

Manitoba Owls eBird list (Mar 14 - 18,2026)