

Birds Hill Park Fieldtrip, May 31, 2014
Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

Birds Hill was sculpted by Lake Agassiz as it drained about 10,000 years ago, covering the hill to a depth of 120 m (394 ft.). During the great floods of 1826 and 1852, which threatened the very survival of the Red River settlement, entire families camped on this high ground with their livestock and possessions.

The park, established in 1964, is named after the Bird family who owned land in the area. The scenery in BHP is a mixture of forest and open prairie. Stands of trembling aspen are separated by patches of grassland and in the higher, well-drained areas, gnarled bur oaks thrive. This combination of grasslands and forest is known as Aspen/Oak Parkland, and you can stroll through tall grass (big bluestem), pick chokecherries at the edge of an aspen stand, feel the coolness in a cedar bog's shade and admire colourful wildflowers in a mixed-grass prairie. Rare plants include moonwort ferns, western silvery aster and whorled milkwort, as well as 13 or 14 native orchid species.

Marsh Marigolds (<i>Caltha palustris</i>)	Tall Meadow-Rue (<i>Thalictrum dasycarpum</i>)
Common Juniper (<i>Juniperis communis</i>)	Carragana (introduced)
Bur oak (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>)	Early Violet (<i>Viola adunca</i>)
Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus</i> spp.)	Arrow wood
Common scouring-rush (<i>Equisetum hyemale</i>)	Trembling Aspen (<i>Populus tremuloides</i>)
Black poplar (<i>Populus balsamifera</i>)	Mayflower (<i>Maianthemum canadensis</i>)
Dwarf milkweed (<i>Asclepias ovalifolia</i>)	Northern Bedstraw (<i>Galium boreale</i>)
Three-flowered avens (<i>Geum triflorum</i>)	Poison Ivy (<i>Rhus radicans</i>) (berries)
Wild Plum (<i>Prunus americana</i>)	Horsetail (<i>Equisetum</i> spp.)
Red Osier Dogwood (<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>)	Common Pussy Toes (<i>Antennaria microphylla</i>)
Chokecherry (<i>Prunus virginiana</i>) (in bud)	Wild Strawberry (<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>)
Saskatoon (<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>) (in flower)	Downy Yellow Violet (<i>Viola</i>)
Common dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>)	Lesser Burdock (<i>Arctium minus</i>)
Wood Anemone (<i>Anemone quinquefolia</i>)	Nodding Trillium (<i>Trillium cernuum</i>)
Hazelnut (<i>Corylus cornuta</i>)	Franklin's ground squirrel
	White-tailed deer
	Burl & fungus
	Blue sulfur
	Variety of other butterflies
	Songbirds, black birds