

TRAIL 8

→ Chappice *and* Many Island Lakes

The undisturbed prairie areas within this trail are particularly good for both McCown's and Chestnut-collared Longspurs and for Sprague's Pipits as well as grassland sparrows. During migration the sloughs are probably as good as anywhere in southeastern Alberta for shorebirds and occasionally, spectacular spring and fall migrations of waterfowl including Sandhill Cranes and White-fronted Geese.

This vast area of undeveloped grasslands is interspersed with saline sloughs and is bounded on the east side by the ephemeral Many Island Lake. This area can be explored over a long day or perhaps even two days.

Chappice Lake (A) is located on the west side of Hwy 41 about 20 km north of Medicine Hat. The sloughs in the area, depending on water level, can be great shorebird magnets. It is difficult to access Chappice Lake itself as one must walk a considerable distance to the waters edge and landowner permission is required before doing so. The small slough between Hwy 41 and Chappice Lake is often surprisingly replete with shorebirds.

From Chappice Lake proceed north along Hwy 41 and turn east towards the Village of Schuler. Schuler Lake (B) lies just south of Schuler. This lake is also very good for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds depending on water levels. The brush and trees in the village could be birded for interesting and unusual passerines. Several years ago a Red-headed Woodpecker was found in the trees on the east shore.

One can access the west end of Many Island Lake (C) by travelling along Hwy 41 to TWP RD 150 taking this road eastward to RGE RD 15 then turning south to the Gas Plant and to the west end of Many Island Lake. This lake can vary from being completely dry to a shallow lake spreading over several townships. When the lake has water it is particularly good for migrating waterfowl including Sandhill Crane, White-fronted, Snow, Ross's and Canada Goose, Tundra Swan and many duck species. Also in large numbers are American White Pelican and Double-crested Cormorant. The water's edge is often good for shorebirds. The northeastern side of the lake is particularly good although before travelling the trails along the north shore of the lake to the east side access permission is required from Heller Ranching. Alternately the east side of the lake (D) can be accessed from the grid roads north of the lake. TWP RD 132 (E) on the south side of Many Islands Lake is a good locale for Upland Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Grouse and at times for Short-eared Owl.



Baird's Sandpiper
Bob Frew



American Avocet
Milt Spitzer



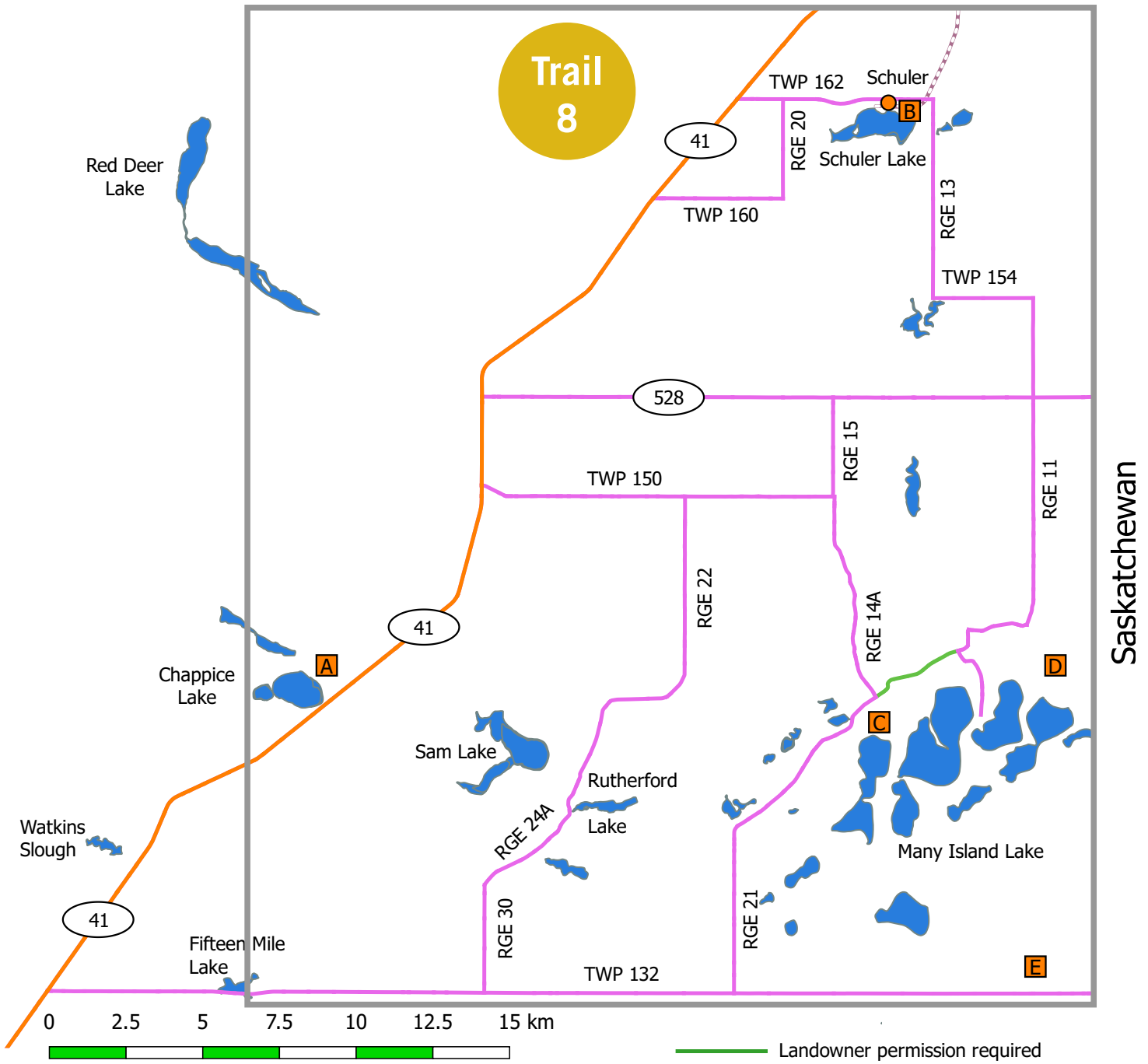
Chappice Lake
Milt Spitzer



Upland Sandpiper
Milt Spitzer



Many Island Lake
Milt Spitzer



Trail 8: Chappice and Many Island Lakes

- Observation Points
- A** Chappice Lake
- B** Schuler Lake
- C** Many Island Lake, Northwest Side
- D** Many Island Lake, Northeast Side
- E** Twp. Rd. 132 near Saskatchewan Border

- Amenities

There are no amenities at Schuler; nearest full service centre is Medicine Hat.

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