

What a difference a few years make. Spring bird counts of two and three years ago were affected by the lack of water in the area. But the theme of the 2006 Saskatoon spring count was "water, water everywhere", in fact too much water for some birds. Offsetting the abundance of water was the less than ideal weather on count day. Counters had to contend with a blustery, gray day that kept threatening to rain but mercifully did not (or at least not much). At the end of the day, we identified 36,110 birds comprising 175 species; both the numbers of birds and species are near to the long term averages for the spring count. But due to the cold and wind, not a single butterfly was seen.

The bounty of water this year had the greatest effect on waterfowl. Numbers of ducks recovered from the low levels of the past few years for almost all species. Most dramatic is the rebound for Eared Grebes, a species that many of us felt was in trouble especially after only 25 were located on the 2003 spring count. This year saw a record high number of Eared Grebes, 2371 in all; the numbers were bolstered by a large breeding colony on Rice Lake.

Paradoxically, the amount of water limited the number of shorebirds; the water level at most sloughs and lakes was so high that there was hardly any shore. Numbers of both arctic nesting shorebirds, such as Semipalmated Sandpiper and Stilt Sandpiper, as well as locally nesting shorebirds, such as Willet and Wilson's Phalarope, were 30% to 90% below average.

The counts for most woodland and grassland songbirds were at or above expected values with noteworthy high numbers of the common swallow species, House Wren, and American Goldfinch. But it was another poor year for warblers with the exception of the locally nesting Yellow Warbler. To judge migrating warbler abundance, I calculate a warbler index (WI) which is simply the ratio of the total number of non-

Yellow Warblers to the number of Yellow Warblers seen on the spring count. Over the past 20 years, the WI has ranged from 0.2 (bad warbler year) to 4.8 (heaven). This year the WI hit a new low—0.195. Despite the poor numbers, 15 warbler species were seen although many were represented by just a single bird.

The respectable number of species found meant that a number of rarities were seen, and given the water levels it is no surprise that some unusual waterbirds were found. Cinnamon Teal normally range only into the extreme south of Saskatchewan, but two of them were visiting the Saskatoon area on count day. Also seen was a Clark's Grebe on Blackstrap Reservoir and a Wood Duck. Notable hawks included an Osprey, a Sharp-shinned Hawk, a Ferruginous Hawk, and four Peregrine Falcons. Several Grasshopper and Baird's Sparrows were heard. The rarest bird seen this year was a Northern Mockingbird. Mockingbirds normally range only as far north as the middle of the US, but some do wander and occasionally come to Saskatoon. The last one seen on a spring count was in 1995.

Robert Johanson  
Statsman  
2006

NE1	NE2	SE1	SE2A	SE2B	SW1	SW2	NW1	NW2	City	Animals sans feathers	2006
							x			Beaver	x
	4	x		1		4	x		1	Muskrat	10
							x			Weasel	x
									4	Least Chipmunk	4
									2	Red Squirrel	2
				3	11		x		20	Richardson's Ground Squirrel	34
									2	Nuttall's Cottontail	2
		x		4						White-tailed Jack Rabbit	4
		x							3	Snowshoe Hare	3
						6				Pronghorn Antelope	6
	2	x		1	5		x			Mule Deer	8
5		x	2		2	5	x	2		White-tailed Deer	16
	3	x								Coyote	3
1		x		1		2	x			Red Fox	4
								1		Skunk	1
			1				x			Badger	1
		x								Raccoon	x
					10					Boreal Chorus Frog	10
					1					Wood Frog	1



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NE1	NE2	SE1	SE2A	SE2B	SW1	SW2	NW1	NW2	City	Aves	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
											05/27	05/28	05/29	05/24	05/25	05/26	05/27	05/22	05/23	05/24	05/25	05/27	05/28
		19		19		2	3	9	69	American White Pelican	121	64	126	105	144	196	116	129	84	118	75	127	146
		30		26	1			1	5	Double-crested Cormorant	63	34	129	33	38	33	242	217	18	16	16	50	37
		1								American Bittern	1			2		3	9		2	6	1	10	8
						1				Great Blue Heron	1	4		2	1		4	4	6	3	4	3	4
										Great Egret											2		
										Cattle Egret									1				
					1					Black-crowned Night Heron	1				2		2	7		2	4	2	1
		3						3		Turkey Vulture	6	2	1	5		1	1	3	1		1	2	
								1	1	Osprey	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	3					
										Bald Eagle		1					1	1					
13	4	6	2	10	6	10	7	6	3	Northern Harrier	67	61	27	27	24	41	75	35	40	36	64	46	57
		1								Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	2		1	1	1	2		4		1	2	1
1							2			Cooper's Hawk	3	5	4	4		5	5	6	2	1	5	4	1
										Northern Goshawk										1			1
										Broad-winged Hawk								1					
5	3	16	1	10	14	17		5	5	Swainson's Hawk	76	37	61	47	52	48	45	29	35	49	28	32	46
2	9	14	3	11	9	2	9	5	2	Red-tailed Hawk	66	62	63	56	73	49	87	59	71	46	90	81	67
					1					Ferruginous Hawk	1						1	2	1		1	1	
										Rough-legged Hawk		1								1	1		
										Golden Eagle									2				
										• Falconidae sp. •				1		1							
		5			1	4		2	7	American Kestrel	19	23	8	5	11	11	10	12	16	10	7	9	18
	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	9	Merlin	16	26	19	23	29	19	25	22	16	10	25	15	10
1	3									Peregrine Falcon	4	2		2	1			3	1	1	1		
										Prairie Falcon									1	1		1	
										Yellow Rail											1	5	
										Virginia Rail		1				1			1		1	5	4
20	3	17	1	10	14	6	13	8	8	Sora	100	29	35	35	20	35	106	49	40	51	96	106	101
117	95	123	5	104	57	156	73	130	10	American Coot	870	372	505	149	1093	176	3089	455	737	522	629	805	250
5						1				Sandhill Crane	6	13	4	15	9	2		8	7	8	8	41	
516										• Shorebird sp. •	516	168				18	730	800					
9	8			1						Black-bellied Plover	18	38		71	6	79	206	100	392	45	442	561	122
					26					American Golden-Plover	26	87	1	146	31	2	41		8	59		189	3
	65									Semipalmated Plover	65	7	1	2	2		26			1	1		1
										Piping Plover							2	2	3		6	3	
18	17	8	4	11	27	16	4	13	4	Killdeer	122	116	138	155	83	120	153	144	196	43	62	109	107
69	69	9	3	50	29	15	63	7		American Avocet	314	436	150	109	63	122	242	277	207	185	442	211	169
					3					Greater Yellowlegs	3		1		5	5	3	10		10			
		1			6	1		1		Lesser Yellowlegs	9	5	4	7	13	6	13	51	13	5	4	9	10
	2				1					Solitary Sandpiper	3			1	2		2	2		1	2		6
7	4	7	2	5	17	8	3	2	3	Willet	58	37	79	99	160	102	95	81	90	36	35	87	77
		6		2		4	6	3	3	Spotted Sandpiper	24	24	40	53	29	34	40	70	34	43	35	40	18
			1							Upland Sandpiper	1	2	2	3	6	3	4	9	14	1	2	8	7
										Whimbrel													
					1	2				Long-billed Curlew	3	6		5	2	3	3	2	18			1	6
										Hudsonian Godwit					3	1				8			



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NE1	NE2	SE1	SE2A	SE2B	SW1	SW2	NW1	NW2	City	Aves	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
											05/27	05/28	05/29	05/24	05/25	05/26	05/27	05/22	05/23	05/24	05/25	05/27	05/28
		3			1				1	<b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b>	5	8	4	7	12	1	3	15	1	7	16	2	3
		1				1			1	<b>Downy Woodpecker</b>	3	5	9	6	15	7	4	10	4	3	7	4	4
2	2	2			1				2	<b>Hairy Woodpecker</b>	9	10	9	17	11	7	7	13	10	5	16	7	8
										Black-backed Woodpecker													1
	2	6	4		11	6	2	4	20	<b>Northern Flicker</b>	55	66	42	31	40	22	42	44	37	27	39	28	40
		1			1					<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>	2												
1										<b>Olive-sided Flycatcher</b>	1	2	5	3	1	1		3		2	4	2	2
										Western Wood-Pewee			5		3	5	4	2	1	5	1	2	3
										• Empidonax sp. •			62		3	3	1	52		26	7	2	
										Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			1			1			1		1		
							2			<b>Alder Flycatcher</b>	2	2	15		5	1	4	6			5		12
20	14	59	3	9	17	9	29	9	22	<b>Least Flycatcher</b>	191	202	174	312	157	178	250	158	367	96	127	241	230
		4	1		2			1	2	<b>Eastern Phoebe</b>	10	10	13	13	23	6	19	16	19	9	8	10	13
										Say's Phoebe			1	2			2		1		1		1
										Great Crested Flycatcher													1
6	5	24	5	10	11	10	4	2	1	<b>Western Kingbird</b>	78	102	102	69	26	66	71	27	64	8	43	58	68
12	5	32	13	14	17	25	16	14	28	<b>Eastern Kingbird</b>	176	104	256	83	68	91	199	64	158	28	118	126	187
	2				5	6		1	1	<b>Loggerhead Shrike</b>	15	19	7	15	9	5	11	12	10	8	10	16	21
										Northern Shrike													
										• Vireo sp. •					1								
										Blue-headed Vireo			1	1	2	4	1	1	2	6	1		
9		9	1	3	5	3	13	3	1	<b>Warbling Vireo</b>	47	43	8	52	8	61	71	19	97	10	10	25	60
		1								<b>Philadelphia Vireo</b>	1		2			1		1	1		1		2
1		4	1		4	2	6	2	13	<b>Red-eyed Vireo</b>	33	11	17	11	3	49	76	9	67	2	7	1	88
					1				5	<b>Blue Jay</b>	6	10	6	9	18	16	17	20	8	13	14	5	2
35	44	47	3	21	35	66	26	25	132	<b>Black-billed Magpie</b>	434	459	415	448	453	406	441	381	289	235	266	256	360
66	25	52	15	56	57	82	18	46	169	<b>American Crow</b>	586	532	656	600	795	679	750	595	414	376	304	271	589
	2	7		1	3		5	2	1	<b>Common Raven</b>	21	34	15	16	17	15	13	20	6	3	4		1
27	1	3	2	14	16	6	6			<b>Horned Lark</b>	75	87	89	105	23	23	28	19	59	52	120	87	161
				200						• Swallow sp. •	200	1524											
	1	226	17	30	4	5		26	15	<b>Purple Martin</b>	324	90	184	281	153	141	134	172	52	37	37	73	59
18	508	527	10	86	235	157	13	26	33	<b>Tree Swallow</b>	1613	672	904	280	506	292	259	450	240	418	311	179	318
	1	3						1		<b>Northern Rough-winged Swallow</b>	5		6	6	4	3	4	12	16	7	2	4	6
	1200	217	30	17	65	320	38	20	10	<b>Bank Swallow</b>	1917	418	464	177	103	51	335	195	346	93	290	533	447
	20	23		7	6	100	51			<b>Cliff Swallow</b>	207	161	2445	277	2	261	151	62	492	860	858	1055	299
31	48	90	20	78	45	76	34	15	50	<b>Barn Swallow</b>	487	188	486	199	154	166	340	337	317	273	266	274	648
5	2	7		1	7	1	5		30	<b>Black-capped Chickadee</b>	58	64	73	79	147	56	49	75	32	33	54	37	24
		2							8	<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b>	10	9	23	13	33	4	31	14	10	12	7	3	7
					1					<b>White-breasted Nuthatch</b>	1			1	3	1		1		1	1	2	5
										Brown Creeper							1						
59	20	42	2	15	28	21	27	23	70	<b>House Wren</b>	307	230	108	189	64	175	206	115	250	35	40	134	217
1		1		1						<b>Sedge Wren</b>	3		1	2		1	8		4	1	2	5	7
		2		3	3					<b>Marsh Wren</b>	8	10	11	3	3	8	17	18	30	12	10	24	36
										Golden-crowned Kinglet										2			
									6	<b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b>	6	8	19	6	8	3	4	12	6	12	7	4	1
										Eastern Bluebird			1						4				

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											05/27	05/28	05/29	05/24	05/25	05/26	05/27	05/22	05/23	05/24	05/25	05/27	05/28
7	2	24	4	4	8	4	9	13		<b>Mountain Bluebird</b>	75	43	114	71	22	22	53	37	45	23	33	51	87
										• Thrush sp. •				2				1					
		7		1	3		3			<b>Veery</b>	14	15	3	12	12	7	17	4	30	1	6	8	48
										3 <b>Gray-cheeked Thrush</b>	3			1	11	3		3	1	6	6	2	1
	1	1								2 <b>Swainson's Thrush</b>	4	11	66	16	96	21	45	66		84	127	20	7
										Hermit Thrush		5	8	2	3	5	3	5	8	2	4		3
										Wood Thrush													
50	21	31	22	30	40	42	31	27	308	<b>American Robin</b>	602	615	623	526	621	481	694	467	374	287	329	270	445
										Varied Thrush												1	
6	3	19	2	9	9	2	6	2	25	<b>Gray Catbird</b>	83	68	72	51	35	74	79	49	76	10	15	27	74
						1				<b>Northern Mockingbird</b>	1												1
1	2	8	3	10	3	10	4	1	23	<b>Brown Thrasher</b>	65	42	71	51	33	42	54	73	68	30	47	53	38
2	9	44		6	28	5	5	14	6	<b>European Starling</b>	119	87	78	45	24	7	48	34	61	35	59	38	85
										American Pipit				1									
7		1	2		4	2	5	1		<b>Sprague's Pipit</b>	22	21	44	39	31	14	20	18	38	8	14	10	42
										Bohemian Waxwing				4									
12	15	19		42	46	12			14	<b>Cedar Waxwing</b>	160	58	1127	33	97	96	328	11	38	18	52	26	762
2		4		6	7		9	4	15	<b>Tennessee Warbler</b>	47	76	180	59	205	116	68	57	4	19	27	16	18
		2		1			1		2	<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b>	6	7	27	21	51	6	15	9	18	14	16	23	20
										Nashville Warbler								2					
47	19	96	10	76	44	15	24	40	225	<b>Yellow Warbler</b>	596	543	440	611	330	650	725	414	554	251	281	324	387
										Chestnut-sided Warbler			1		2		1						
										Magnolia Warbler			15		22	2		5		3	1		
				2						<b>Cape May Warbler</b>	2		1		17		4		1	4	1		
	2			2					5	<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>	9	11	81	12	1033	13	17	72	22	179	102	24	5
										Black-throated Green Warbler					2								
									1	<b>Blackburnian Warbler</b>	1				1								
										Palm Warbler				1	24			3		11			
										Bay-breasted Warbler			4		1						1		
		3								<b>Blackpoll Warbler</b>	3	10	20	3	32	14	5	36	1	12	23	10	3
1		1		1	1					<b>Black-and-white Warbler</b>	4		9	1	43	2	4	1	10	6	5	1	3
	1	4			9		2			<b>American Redstart</b>	16	11	26	12	40	15	21	25	52	4	8	14	32
	1		2		2		2			<b>Ovenbird</b>	7	7	6	4	57	2	7	15	20	10	5	11	13
									1	<b>Northern Waterthrush</b>	1	2			33		1						1
								1		<b>Connecticut Warbler</b>	1			2	1	5				1			
									1	<b>Mourning Warbler</b>	1	1	6	1	2	3	2	2		1			
1		6			4		2		4	<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>	17	14	18	15	12	16	43	22	70	4	12	37	71
										Wilson's Warbler			7	1	9	1		4		1	3		
									1	<b>Canada Warbler</b>	1		5		4		1	1					
										Yellow-breasted Chat													
										Scarlet Tanager					1								
										Western Tanager					1		1						1
										• Sparrow sp. •		18											
4	1	21		7	11	1	14	7	5	<b>Spotted Towhee</b>	71	77	57	63	31	26	45	53	104	46	55	110	101
										American Tree Sparrow													
15	2	32	10	16	16	34	5	5	152	<b>Chipping Sparrow</b>	287	250	307	230	310	264	292	287	209	688	111	74	108

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											05/27	05/28	05/29	05/24	05/25	05/26	05/27	05/22	05/23	05/24	05/25	05/27	05/28
53	1	68	3	28	63	23	38	20	150	<b>Clay-colored Sparrow</b>	447	392	400	380	413	358	473	569	307	421	267	274	328
38	9	32	20	12	52	29	22	25	11	<b>Vesper Sparrow</b>	250	250	252	179	178	125	185	140	328	147	205	208	211
		13			3	5	6			<b>Lark Sparrow</b>	27	29	30	14	6	7	12	5	8	6	3	8	20
										Lark Bunting					1				1		1		2
37	2	18	1	10	57	9	37	13	4	<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>	188	99	130	110	106	96	147	55	164	88	102	141	155
		2								<b>Grasshopper Sparrow</b>	2				2				2				5
1				1	4					<b>Baird's Sparrow</b>	6	1			1	1	2	1	11	4	2	7	15
11		3		1	2		5	5	3	<b>Le Conte's Sparrow</b>	30	3	5	16	9	10	29	13	23	17	30	66	34
		4			1		2			<b>Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow</b>	7	3	8			2	10		4	1	3	7	4
										Fox Sparrow													
11	3	12		14	22	1	8	11	27	<b>Song Sparrow</b>	109	136	103	127	101	97	143	113	116	87	102	97	105
										Lincoln's Sparrow			1		17		1	3	1	4	3	1	
										Swamp Sparrow				1	9					4	3	1	1
4	1						4	1	2	<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>	12	3		7	90	4	3	46	3	91	51	15	9
										Harris's Sparrow					24		3	6		31	3	1	
										White-crowned Sparrow			1	5	21	1	1	5	2	57	18	3	
										Dark-eyed Junco			1		5		2				2		
										McCown's Longspur							2						
										Lapland Longspur		150		2215	853		50	1050		10210	467	1345	2
										Chestnut-collared Longspur									1		2	2	
										Snow Bunting										29			
2		1					3		3	<b>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</b>	9	10	6	5	18	8	5	19	8	34	9	15	14
										Lazuli Bunting					2								
		1		3		4	2			<b>Bobolink</b>	10	18	9	5	3	13	21	6	29	10	7	28	23
60	56	151	32	100	314	64	68	44	118	<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>	1007	884	992	1017	1037	964	953	902	443	405	609	357	550
62	52	65	26	45	110	86	47	60	17	<b>Western Meadowlark</b>	570	467	489	294	203	198	322	293	362	224	223	331	527
25	47	45	54	58	115	49	37	29	8	<b>Yellow-headed Blackbird</b>	467	317	430	435	556	251	510	362	314	295	540	382	407
										Rusty Blackbird		2				2							
26	21	25	87	10	180	147	10	16	30	<b>Brewer's Blackbird</b>	552	380	315	287	445	386	374	292	210	247	280	185	239
3	1	13	10	2	7	12	5	4	68	<b>Common Grackle</b>	125	95	146	91	118	130	175	90	64	52	54	22	115
51	18	39	6	36	86	11	16	24	27	<b>Brown-headed Cowbird</b>	314	312	326	258	278	142	163	115	457	232	179	345	340
3	6	8	2	4	12	7	8	3	11	<b>Baltimore Oriole</b>	64	79	52	76	65	93	95	40	104	27	73	57	93
					1	2				<b>Purple Finch</b>	3				1			4		3	2		
		6	8		1	8	1		52	<b>House Finch</b>	76	92	77	52	86	38	29	4	2	1			
										• Crossbill sp. •					1								
										Red Crossbill								4		4			
										White-winged Crossbill				2								2	
										Common Redpoll												8	
									1	<b>Pine Siskin</b>	1	64		1	22	83	36	152	2	72	25	68	8
36	8	60	5	18	27	55	22	20	60	<b>American Goldfinch</b>	311	272	271	249	103	243	269	163	247	83	116	132	248
20	22	84	10	36	33	23	45	25	705	<b>House Sparrow</b>	1003	1446	2495	2059	1093	632	1352	1145	676	764	423	293	552
3963	3142	5839	774	2951	4859	6105	2001	1610	4866	<b>TOTAL BIRDS</b>	36110	40666	29126	25190	22961	31146	33571	24287	29307	30554	27915	57018	23721

Saskatoon Spring Bird Count

27 May 2006

NE1	NE2	SE1	SE2A	SE2B	SW1	SW2	NW1	NW2	City		2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
4:50	7:15	5:50	8:39	6:32	6:30	6:10	5:20	6:24		start										
22:05	17:15	22:05	16:48	19:42	19:30	21:10	21:30	17:45		end										
9.0	7.0	15.0	7.0	8.6	9.0	13.0	13.0	9.0	20.6	Car Party Hours	111	100	114	112	94	93	109	86	81	70
6.9	3.0	4.5	0.5	4.5	4.0	2.0	4.0	2.0	43.9	Foot Party Hours	75	77	85	106	123	87	95	76	65	32
										Bicycle Party Hours				4					5	
15.9	10.0	19.5	7.5	13.1	13.0	15.0	17.0	11.0	64.5	TOTAL Party Hours	187	177	199	222	217	180	205	162	151	102
271.8	143.0	266.0	141.7	260.0	284.0	251.0	260.0	203.0	196.2	Car Party km	2277	2146	2205	2406	2102	2137	2219	1764	1985	1451
3.0	3.0	8.0	1.5	2.0	4.0	2.5	2.0	2.5	98.2	Foot Party km	127	79	86	148	147	107	168	82	82	37
										Bicycle Party km				13					96	
274.8	146.0	274.0	143.2	262.0	288.0	253.5	262.0	205.5	294.4	TOTAL km	2403	2225	2291	2566	2249	2244	2387	1845	2162	1488

Teams (Leaders)

NE1 Michael Williams, Lucille Bradatsch, Mercedes Wayman;  
Pauline Kotelko, Lynn Oliphant (feeders)

NE2 Marten Stoffel, Gerard Lahey, John Lahey-Wiggs,  
Darcy Maatman

SE1 Stan Shadick, Dave McRuer, Jan Shadick, Bill Wilson

SE2A Jim Wood, Janice Solem, Angela Stern

SE2B Robert Johanson, Kay Krueger

SW1 Guy Wapple, Dan Neves, Nick Saunders

SW2 Lorne Duczek, Carol Maccan

NW1 Bob Godwin, Kathy Meeres

NW2 J. Frank Roy, John Bond, Stan Dunville, Judy Toews

City

SW Maureen DuWors, M. Morrison

C Carol Blenkin, Lois Thompson, Mary Toews, Heather Wagg

N Doug Smith, David Wright

NE Donna Bruce, Linda Schnedar

U Mary Gilliland, Marc Bechard, Jeff Ehman,

Mary Houston, Stuart Houston, Jamie Mandel

SE Hilda Noton, Gale Diakuw, Donna Haugen

S Lois Wooding

S-C Craig Salisbury, Lorriene Salisbury

E Yvonne Cuttle, Ted Melville, Chris Soteris

Unique Species

Olive-sided Flycatcher

Semipalmated Plover

Clark's Grebe, American Bittern, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Philadelphia Vireo, Blackpoll Warbler, Grasshopper Sparrow

Upland Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher

Hooded Merganser

Greater White-fronted Goose, Black-crowned Night Heron, Ferruginous Hawk, American Golden-Plover, Greater Yellowlegs,  
White-breasted Nuthatch, Cape May Warbler

Great Blue Heron, Northern Mockingbird

Wood Duck, Common Nighthawk, Alder Flycatcher, Connecticut Warbler

Herring Gull

Short-billed Dowitcher

Blackburnian Warbler, Canada Warbler

Pine Siskin

Northern Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler

Weather

temperature range: 7-10°C

rain: nil-light drizzle

sky: mostly cloudy

wind: NE to 30 km/hr