

Saint John, N.B.

Dec. 29, 1984; 7:40 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; temp. -1° to 3° C; ground varying from bare to 4 cm. snow cover; rivers partly open, lakes frozen. 25 participants (15 in 6 field parties, plus 10 feeder reports). Total party-hours, 31.2 (12 on foot, 19.2 by car); total party-km, 431.2 (15.3 on foot, 415.9 by car).

Common Loon, 1; Canada Goose, 52; Green-winged Teal, 1; Am. Black Duck, 395; Mallard, 5; *Northern Pintail*, 1 (previous record: 1 in 1967); *Canvasback*, 2 (previous records: 2 in 1961, 1 in 1981); *Ring-necked Duck*, 3 (previous records: 20 in 1969, 1 in 1973); Greater Scaup, 12; Common Eider, 1; Common Goldeneye, 147; Barrow's Goldeneye, 1; Bufflehead, 53; Common Merganser, 81; Red-breasted Merganser, 35; Bald Eagle, 1; *Northern Harrier*, 1 (previous records: 1 in 1976, 1 in 1983); Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Northern Goshawk, 1; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 2; Purple Sandpiper, 1; *Bonaparte's Gull*, 1 (no previous records); Ring-billed Gull, 5; Herring Gull, 960; Iceland Gull, 82; Glaucous Gull, 5; Great Black-backed Gull, 218; Rock Dove, 305; Mourning Dove, 60 (previous high: 55 in 1981); Short-eared Owl, 1; *Yellow-bellied Sapsucker*, 1 (no previous records); Downy Woodpecker, 16; Hairy Woodpecker, 8; *Northern Flicker*, 1 (previous record: 1 in 1982); Pileated Woodpecker, during count period; Horned Lark, 6; Gray Jay, 1; Blue Jay, 99; American Crow, 168; Common Raven, 46; Black-capped Chickadee, 141; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown Creeper, during count period; *Winter Wren*, 1 (previous records: 1 in 1961, 1 in 1979); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; American Robin, 966 (previous high: 35 in 1966); Northern Mockingbird, during count period; Northern Shrike, 1; European Starling, 7327 (previous high: 2869 in 1973); Northern Cardinal, 1; American Tree Sparrow, 37; *Savannah Sparrow*, 2 (previous records: 1 in 1967, 1 in 1968); *Sharp-tailed Sparrow*, 1 (previous record: 1 in 1973); Fox Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 7; Swamp Sparrow, 5 (previous high: 1 in each of 5 years); White-throated Sparrow, 24; sparrow sp., 2; Dark-eyed Junco, 28; Lapland Longspur, 2; Rusty Blackbird, 4 (previous high: 2 in 1975); Brown-headed Cowbird, 44; *Northern Oriole*, during count period; Purple Finch, 1; White-winged Crossbill, 6; Pine Siskin, 40; American Goldfinch, 102; small finches sp., 18; Evening Grosbeak, 149; House Sparrow, 93 (lowest House Sparrow total we have ever had). Total: 11,793 birds of 66 species (Previous high: 64 species, in 1972 and 1973), plus four additional species during count period.

It was quite an amazing count, with a record number of species seen and a very high total of individual birds, exceeded only in 1957 (13,052) and 1963 (12,027), both years when very large numbers of gulls were found in the area. This year the abundance was mainly contributed to by Starlings and Robins (!!). If there had been more field observers and more feeder reports I feel confident that 70 or more species could have been counted. We missed seeing several species that have been quite regular on the Saint John count, such as Boreal Chickadee, Snow Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll and to a lesser degree, Great Cormorant and Red-tailed Hawk. If anyone found those species between Dec. 15 and Jan. 2, or on the count day, I would like to hear about it.

The 1984 count marks my 25th year compiling the results of the Saint John Christmas Bird Count. During the last five of those years I have not been living in Saint John and as a result the count has suffered. To aid club planning, I am giving notice that I will not be organizing the count in 1985. I will be glad to provide help and advice to whomever is chosen by the club to take over responsibility for this project.

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