2016 Saint John Christmas Bird Count Summary

The 2016 Saint John Christmas Bird count – one of over two dozen in New Brunswick and more than 2000 in North America – was held on December 17. The number of species observed on a single day is always of interest, but so is simply the number of birds that a few people going outdoors or watching from their windows can see. This year, the count was over 15,000 birds – more birds around us than one might think given the few hours of daylight and the cold temperatures of late December – and about 2500 birds more than the 10-year average for the Christmas Bird Count.

Two introduced species – Rock Pigeons and European Starlings – were quite a big part of the numbers at 600 and 3000 respectively, but one other introduced species – House Sparrow – has been declining and only 20 individuals were observed in just one count sector. Mallards and Black Ducks made up another 1000 birds and Herring Gulls and American Crows were over 3500 and 1500 respectively.

That leaves about 5000 other birds. A few semi-random comments on them, based on the attached spreadsheet, follows.

- Of the 90-odd species that have been seen at least once over the last ten count years, about half were seen in greater numbers than average this year. The other half were either lower in numbers or not seen at all.
- The ducks were well represented, with both Common and Barrow's Goldeneyes and Common Mergansers being more numerous than usual, perhaps due to the earlier count date and more open water. Scaup are almost always seen though and this year there were none.
- Raptors, and especially Bald Eagles, were well-represented although for the first time in a few
 years there were no Turkey Vultures reported. They were certain around, but perhaps not flying
 due to the weather, as they were reported both before and after the Count Day.
- All species of gull were down in numbers, some considerably, other than Herring Gulls which were higher by more than 450.
- 150 Blue Jays was 80-ish more than normal, but American Robins at almost 300 was almost 250 higher than normal.
- There were two good-sized flocks of waxwings, but they weren't the usual species. The 10-year average is to see 80 Bohemian Waxwings and one Cedar Waxwing every year, but this year there were 120 waxwings reported, not a single one of them as Bohemian.
- American Goldfinches, Purple Finches and Dark-eyed Juncos were well above average, but one
 well-known species was very well above average as noted by both field and feeder observers –
 the Red-breasted Nuthatch. It has been a banner year for them.
- So-called "winter finches" (crossbills, grosbeaks, siskins and redpolls) were not widely observed, but most species were present and several large flocks were noted cleaning out the conifer seeds in the western portion of the Count Circle.

- Three species were new to the list this year (or at least had not been seen in the last 10 years):
 Swamp Sparrow, Black Guillemot and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, all birds that are relatively well known in the area but not in December.
- During the Count Week, four species were added, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Short-eared Owl,
 Carolina Wren and, as previously mentioned, Turkey Vulture.
- During the Count Period, which runs from December 15 to January 5, a Boreal Chickadee was added.
- One species has attracted attention across North America. Three Shelducks, a large European species of duck with striking plumage, was discovered on Count Day at the Irving Nature
 Park. There is a possibility that these ducks are local escapees from a farm or zoo, but if they are confirmed to be off-track migrants, they may be North America's first confirmed record for the species. They have become local heroes with many wondering if they will stay the winter.
- As for the people stats, there were 36 field observers plus 10 feeder counters, with some feeder
 counters coordinating the count for the feeders of their neighbours as well. In total, 92 hours
 were spent in the field (when two or more people are counting together for an hour, it counts as
 one hour), with 650 km covered, 65 of that on foot. Both the number of hours and the number
 of kilometres were slightly lower than last year.

Rounding off the count statistics, our provincial bird, the Black-capped Chickadee, was seen in every sector with over 700 being counted. On the other hand, one of the species proposed to be our national bird, the Grey Jay, seen sporadically during the past ten years of the count, was not seen at all this year. Another species suggested as our national bird, the Common Loon, was observed.

Oh, and the number everyone wants to know. On Count Day, 71 species were observed, five more than the 10-year average. A total of 76 species were seen during the Count Period – including the Shelducks.

Finally, thanks to all who participated. Look for an email in November or so indicating the date for the 2017 CBC. And for all those familiar with doing the count with our predecessor, Richard Blacquiere, we will keep things consistent and say that the weather forecast for every potential count day in December 2017 looks fabulous for birding!

Ann & Donald MacPhail January, 2017

2016 Saint John Christmas Bird Count

							00	uiiit	0011		311110			oun										10				above	below
Species	W1	W2	W2m	W3	W4 W	4a W5	W6	W7	W8 C	1&C2 C2	СЗ	c3s	RP E	1 E2	2 E3	E	4 E	4a E	5 F	K1	K2 F	eeders			+/-			avg	avg
Canada Goose																			26			0	26	28		Canada Goose	1	0	1
Wood Duck																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gadwall American Wigeon						1													3			0	1	6	-5 2	Gadwall American Wigeon	1	0	1 0
American Wigeon American Black Duck		4				333	3	12				3			2		14		3		3	0	378	594		American Wigeon American Black Duck	1	0	1
Mallard	12	28				181	44	4			24	62					212		37	5	60	0	754			Mallard	1	1	0
Blue-winged Teal																				-		ō	0	0	0	0	0	Ó	0
Northern Shoveler						1																0	1	0	1	Northern Shoveler	1	1	0
Northern Pintail																						0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1
Green-winged Teal						1											1					0	2	8	-6	Green-winged Teal	1	0	1
Canvasback																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Redhead Ring-necked Duck		1					2															0	0	0	2	0 Ring-necked Duck	0	0	0
Tufted Duck		1					2															0	0	0	0	ning-necked Duck	0	1	0
Greater Scaup																			1			0	1	42		Greater Scaup	1	0	1
Lesser Scaup																	4		2			0	6	7		Lesser Scaup	i	0	1
Common Eider																			6			ō	6	16	-10	Common Eider	1	ō	1
Surf Scoter																						0	0	2	-2	0	0	0	1
White-winged Scoter																						0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1
Black Scoter												_										0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bufflehead Common Goldeneve	125	140				53 7	53 12				205	6					45 22		4	13		0	161 524	168 295		Bufflehead Common Goldeneye	1	0	1
Barrow's Goldeneye	123	140				,	12				9						22			13		0	9	293		Barrow's Goldeneye	1	1	0
Hooded Merganser											9											ő	0	6	-6	0	0	ò	1
Common Merganser		6				13	75	28									18					ō	140	48		Common Merganser	1	1	Ó
Red-breasted Merganser						2	50					17					4					0	73	80		Red-breasted Merganser	1	0	1
Ring-necked Pheasant					1																	0	1	0	1	Ring-necked Pheasant	1	1	0
Ruffed Grouse						1													1		5	0	7	5		Ruffed Grouse	1	1	0
Spruce Grouse Northern Bobwhite																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-throated Loon						3																0	3	4		Red-throated Loon	0	0	0
Common Loon		1	1			1														1		0	4	6		Common Loon	1	0	1
Pied-biled Grebe							1															0	1	0	1	Pied-biled Grebe	i	1	ò
Horned Grebe																						0	0	2	-2	0	0	0	1
Red-necked Grebe																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Double-crested Cormorant																						0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1
Great Cormorant																						0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1
Great Blue Heron Snowy Egret																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turkey Vulture																						0	0	3	-3	0	0	0	1
Bald Eagle			1	11		1								1		1	1					0	16	21		Bald Fagle	1	0	i
Northern Harrier						4								•					1			ő	5	1		Northern Harrier	i	1	o o
Sharp-shinned Hawk				1															1			1	3	2	1	Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	0
Cooper's Hawk																						0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1
Northern Goshawk																	1					0	1	1		Northern Goshawk	1	0	0
Red-tailed Hawk				2																		0	2	1		Red-tailed Hawk	1	1	0
Rough-legged Hawk Merlin																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meriin Peregrine Falcon							1															0	0	1	-1 0	Peregrine Falcon	0	0	0
American Coot																						0	0	Ó	0	0	0	0	0
Purple Sandpiper																						0	ő	3	-3	o o	0	ő	1
Little Gull																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black-headed Gull																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bonaparte's Gull																						0	0	40	-40	0	0	0	1
Ring-billed Gull		124		3000	18	57	4 146	2	2	23	4	18			3 2	5	1 42	3	11 65	1		0 18	27 3617	111 3152	-84 465	Ring-billed Gull	1	0	1
Herring Gull Iceland Gull		124		3000	10	48	146	75 2	2	23		10		6	3 4	21	8	3	1	1		0	72			Herring Gull Iceland Gull	1	1	1
Lesser Black-hacked Gull						40	0	2						0			0					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glaucous Gull							1															0	1	2		Glaucous Gull	1	0	1
Great Black-backed Gull		2	5	40			1									1	1		1			ō	51	335	284	Great Black-backed Gull	1	ō	1
Black-legged Kittiwake																						0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1
Dovekie																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Murre					04		4	400		00		40					74	40	^			0	0	3	-3	0 Death Disease	0	0	1
Rock Pigeon White-winged Dove	60	24		3	21		114	100		93	28	13			3	32	74	10	ь			53 0	631 0	692	-61 0	Rock Pigeon 0	0	0	1
Mourning Dove	9		20		10			22			9	2		8		16	37	1	2	3	5	211	355	216		Mourning Dove	1	1	0
Great-horned Owl												-		•			0.		-	•		0	0	0	0	0	o o	ò	ő
Snowy Owl																						ō	ō	ō	0	0	0	0	0
Barred Owl				1																		0	1	0	1	Barred Owl	1	1	0
Short-eared Owl																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Saw-whet Owl																						0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-bellied Woodpecker Downy Woodpecker				4				1	8		2			3		2	7			2	11	0 11	0 55	2 28	-2 27	0 Downy Woodpecker	1	0	1 0
Downy Woodpecker Hairy Woodpecker	1 4		1	4	1	1	2	1	8		2	1		3		4	7			3	11	11 17	55 32	28 20		Downy Woodpecker Hairy Woodpecker	1	1	0
Black-backed Woodpecker	*						-										3			3		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Flicker	1	1				1																1	4	1	3	Northern Flicker	1	1	0
Pileated Woodpecker			1			•																1	2	2	0	Pileated Woodpecker	1	0	0
Northern Shrike																				1		0	1	1	0	Northern Shrike	1	0	0
Gray Jay																			_			0	0	2	-2	0	0	0	1
Blue Jay	10	5	1	2	1		5	2		1	3			1			24	2	5	14	39	32	153	71	82	Blue Jay	1	1	0
American Crow Common Rayen	29	44	3	717 50	35	28	21	25 2	1 2	31	67	19		31	22 2	27 1	128	10	106	9	47 1	55 2	1455 71	988 74		American Crow Common Rayen	1	1	0
Horned Lark	1		1	50		10	- 1	2	2								3		4	2	1	0	10	1		Horned Lark	1	1	0
Black-capped Chickadee	21	4	7	18	14	48		16	34	4	21	36		28		58	51	3	45	8	190	126	732	728		Black-capped Chickadee	i	1	0
Boreal Chickadee	21	-	,	10		70		10	54	-	21	50			•		٥.	-		3		0	0	1	-1	0	0	ò	1
Tufted Titmouse																						o	o	ó	0	0	ō	0	0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	2	2	10	1	43		6	92		21	10		2	1	18	52	3	15	12	142	15	447		418	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1	0
White-breasted Nuthatch		1			1						1			1								3	7	5	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	1	1	0
Brown Creeper				1										1								0	2	2	0	Brown Creeper	1	0	0

Carolina Wren Golden-crowned Kinglet Ruby-crowned Kinglet					1		1	2		2									1		1		5	0 0 0	0 13 0	0 0 11 2 0 0
Hermit Thrush American Robin							128	154	2	1						1		2		9	1			0	0 299	0 0 57 242
Northern Mockingbird European Starling		1		770			197	143	25		99		75	1000		13		44	60	25	516			0 194	0	1 -1 2719 443
American Pipit		'		770			197	143	25		99		/5	1000		13		44	60	25	516			0	0	0 0
Bohemian Waxwing Cedar Waxwing							77												39		4			0	0 120	81 -81 1 119
Orange-crowned Warbler Yellow-rumped Warbler																								0	0	0 0
Yellow-throated Warbler																								0	0	0 0
Pine Warbler Yellow-breasted Chat																								0	0	0 0
Eastern Towhee American Tree Sparrow	1				4				4									8	12		8		2	0 33	0 72	0 0 53 19
Chipping Sparrow Field Sparrow																								18	18 0	1 17
Savannah Sparrow							1																	0	1	0 1
Fox Sparrow Song Sparrow							1							1		1		3			1			0 9	0 16	1 -1 13 3
Lincoln's Sparrow White-throated Sparrow					1		1		4									1						0 7	0 14	0 0 28 -14
White-crowned Sparrow	4		40		7		2	7	8		2		20	4		14	40		25		4		25	0	0	0 0
Dark-eyed Junco Lapland Longspur	4		10		/		2	/	8		2		20	4		14	18		25		4		25	114 0	264 0	102 162 1 -1
Snow Bunting Northern Cardinal			3	1	2			7	2				3	2			1	7	2	2			6	0 28	0 66	28 -28 46 20
Red-winged Blackbird Common Grackle																								0	0	0 0 2 -2
Brown-headed Cowbird																								0	0	0 0
Baltimore Oriole Pine Grosbeak																							10	0	0 10	0 0
Purple Finch House Finch							1				2							2				12	202	17 14	236 14	4 232 6 8
Red Crossbill White-winged Crossbill										35														0	0 35	8 -8 22 13
Common Redpoll										50														4	54	138 -84
Hoary Redpoll Pine Siskin										90												20	21	0	0 131	0 0 7 124
American Goldfinch Evening Grosbeak	59	5	3	10	10		2	32	4	140	7		32	7		20		61	24		7	26	132 14	199	780 15	423 357 12 3
House Sparrow									20															0	20	77 -57
Others on Count Day Common Shelduck							3																		3	0 3
Black Guillimot							1																		1	0 1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker Swamp Sparrow							1									1									1	0 1
Mallard x Black Hybrid																								0	0	2 -2
Scaup species Duck species													2											0	0	14 -14 24 -22
Hawk species Gull species			1 100	1	9			20		40	1		14				14							0	198	0 2 189 9
Woodpecker species			100		9					40	'		14			1	14							0	1	0 1
Sparrow species Finch species				60				1								21								2	3 81	7 -4 7 74
Total Species Total Individuals	15 338	17 390	14 160	18 4703	16 137	0	36 1257	25 908	22 366	13 498	9 263	0	17 541	16 1201	0	17 213	6 75	20 326	30 916	11 69	30 890	16 132	20 921	27 1187	72 15491	66 6 12816 2675
People Comparables (to 2015)																										
Party hours by car Party hours on foot	3.50 0.00	2.00 0.00	0.00 5.00	4.00 0.25	5.00 1.00		0.30 8.50	4.75 1.00	1.00 7.00	0.00 4.50	5.00 0.00		4.00 1.75	3.00 0.25		3.25 0.75	1.75 0.00	6.00 0.25		1.00 2.50	3.00 4.00	2.00 0.00	5.50 0.25		55.05 37	57 -2 41 -4
Total Party hours	3.50	2.00	5.00	4.25	6.00	0.00	8.80	5.75	8.00	4.50	5.00	0.00	5.75	3.25	0.00	4.00	1.75	6.25	0.00	3.50	7.00	2.00	5.75		92.05	98 -6
Km by car	85.0	47.8	0.0	49.0	26.3		3.0	38.4	15.0	0.0	15.0		48.5	15.0		40.0	26.0	32.0		4.0	68.0	29.0	61.0		603.0	656 -53
Km on foot Total Km	0.0 85.0	0.0 47.8	12.0 12.0	1.0 50.0	0.7 27.0	0.0	11.5 14.5	2.0 40.4	16.5 31.5	6.0	0.0 15.0	0.0	2.5 51.0	0.3 15.3	0.0	0.5 40.5	0.0 26.0	1.0 33.0	0.0	2.0 6.0	12.0 80.0	0.0 29.0	0.0 61.0		68.0 671.0	85 -17 741 -70
										,				2.2					,	,						
Additional during Count Week Red-bellied Woodpecker - dec 16 Turkey Vulture - dec 18 Short-eared Owl - dec 19				1												1		1							1 1	0 1 0 1 0 1
Carolina Wren - dec 20 & 26 Additional during Count Period											1														1	0 1
Boreal Chickadee - jan 31																						1			1	0 1
TOTAL SPECIES, COUN	NT PE	RIOD																							77	

Post-issue edits: 1 Greater Scaup added - Jim Russell, seen on Count Day.

0	0	0	
Solden-crowned Kinglet	1	1	-
0	0	0	-
0	0	0	-
merican Robin	1	1	-
0	0	0	
uropean Starling	1	1	-
0	0	0	-
0	0	0	
Cedar Waxwing	1	1	
0	0	0	
0	0	0	
0	0	0	
0	0	0	-
0	0	0	-
0	0	0	
merican Tree Sparrow	1	1	-
Chipping Sparrow	1	1	
0	0	0	
Savannah Sparrow	1	1	
0	0	0	
Song Sparrow	1	1	
0	0	0	
Vhite-throated Sparrow	1	0	
0	0	0	-
Park-eyed Junco	1	1	
0	0	0	
0	Ö	ō	
lorthern Cardinal	1	1	
0	Ö	Ó	
0	ō	0	
0	Ö	Ö	
0	Ö	Ö	
Pine Grosbeak	1	Ö	
Purple Finch	i	1	
louse Finch	i	1	
0	Ö	ò	
Vhite-winged Crossbill	1	1	
Common Redpoll	i	ò	
0	Ö	0	
Pine Siskin	1	1	
merican Goldfinch	i	1	
vening Grosbeak	1	1	
louse Sparrow	1	Ö	
louse Sparrow	,	U	
Common Shelduck	1	1	,
Black Guillimot	1	1	
ellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	1	-
Swamp Sparrow	1	1	

72 45 46

2016 Saint John CBC Participants (not complete)

Field Teams

W1 Rick Peacock
W2 Don McAlpine
W2-morna Keith Dewar

W3 Richard Blacquiere
W4 Charles Graves

W5 Kelly Honeyman/Jim Wilson

W6 Paul Clark, Eugene and Mary Anne Roy

W7 Frank Kelly

W8 Stephen Clayden

C1 exc RP Joan Pearce. Janet Whitehead, Heather O'Toole

RP Suzanne Bonnell, Holly Haines

C2 Joan Pearce. Janet Whitehead, Heather O'Toole

C3 Suzanne Bonnell, Holly Haines

C3-south Ian Stead

E1 Donald and Ann MacPhail, Phyllis Hart

E2 Judy Whalen
E3 Mike Bamford

E4 Paul Mansz. Merv Cormier

E4a David McCormack

E5 Jim Russell

K1 Richard Blacquiere K2 Joanne Savage

Feeder People (not incl both field and feeder people)

Ida MacPherson (and several others on the Peninsula)

Ngaire Nelson rick barlow

marion sherwood

mary richard jeanne finn-allen louise armstrong heather black

denise johnston