

Saint John Christmas Bird Count
Sunday, December 15, 2019

Weather: most of December leading up to Count Day was relatively mild, with a couple of light snows that disappeared quickly, leaving things green. A few days before the count, it turned cold with some snow but by Count Day, temperatures were above freezing [up to 10°], but with winds of 30 km/h, gusting to 50-70 and some rain. The wind lessened and the day brightened as it progressed. There was lots of open water.

The Birds: many people remarked that there had been fewer birds at their feeders up to Count Day. This may have been due to the mild December and natural food supplies, including an abundant cone crop. A few comments:

- It always impresses me that about 40 people can go outdoors on one of the darkest days of the year in bad weather and find around 10,000 birds from about 60 species. It's a pretty amazing planet we live on
- Total numbers were a bit lower than average, likely due to the wind, but partially due to the fact that the Crane Mountain landfill site is closed on Sundays and hence the couple of thousand gulls that hang out there were not counted
- 19 species of duck were seen including the first Long-tailed Ducks that I recall being on the count
- 7 species of raptor was higher than most counts. It included 30 Bald Eagles
- Two species of warbler were found. They were the "usual" ones if warblers can be considered usual on the Christmas Count. It's not all that rare to get a Yellow-rumped or a Pine, but the 5 Pine Warblers found at Irving Nature Park are more than I recall. They are also part of a wider story which seems to include 20+ Pine Warblers on Deer Island, a couple on Campobello and half a dozen in Eastport, ME. It will be interesting to see if they showed up on the St Stephen, St Andrews or other New Brunswick counts as well. One knowledgeable birder feels they have remained behind, near the coast, because of the large cone crop and mild weather, but are eating various insects that are infesting the cones, not the seeds. A look at a Pine Warbler's bill shows it is not much of a seed eater
- An Eastern Meadowlark, also seen at Irving Nature Park may be a first-ever for the count
- Single individuals include a Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and the Yellow-rumped Warbler. (In case you sometimes wonder if you are going out and just adding to the chickadee count, about half of the count sectors yielded a species not seen in other sectors.)
- Threesomes included 3 Red Crossbills on Count Day and 3 Common Grackles found on the first day of the Count Week
- No owls, no Ruffed Grouse, no Canada Jays, no Boreal Chickadees

The People: 29 field observers braved the elements and 14 feeder counters also contributed to the totals. Collectively, we walked 57 km. We also drove about 550 km; using government sources, we likely emitted around 140 kg of the province's 15 million tons of CO₂ per year in doing so.

Thanks for participating. Only about 350 days to the 2020 count!

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Species	Field & Feeders
Canada Goose	30
Gadwall	18
American Wigeon	1
American Black Duck	624
Mallard	454
Northern Pintail	2
Green-winged Teal	50
Ring-necked Duck	6
Greater Scaup	199
Lesser Scaup	9
Common Eider	4
Surf Scoter	11
Bufflehead	216
Long-tailed Duck	2
Common Goldeneye	79
Hooded Merganser	22
Common Merganser	2
Red-breasted Merganser	14
Common Loon	1
Turkey Vulture	8
Bald Eagle	30
Northern Harrier	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Merlin	1
Peregrine Falcon	2
Ring-billed Gull	84
Herring Gull	1351
Iceland Gull	53
Glaucous Gull	4
Great Black-backed Gull	67
Rock Pigeon	519
Mourning Dove	173
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1
Downy Woodpecker	24
Hairy Woodpecker	14
Northern Flicker	1
Blue Jay	62
American Crow	674
Common Raven	89
Black-capped Chickadee	476
Red-breasted Nuthatch	24
White-breasted Nuthatch	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	52
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
American Robin	34
European Starling	3263
Eastern Meadowlark	1

Cedar Waxwing	30
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Pine Warbler	5
American Tree Sparrow	6
Song Sparrow	10
White-throated Sparrow	10
Dark-eyed Junco	149
Northern Cardinal	24
Purple Finch	18
Red Crossbill	3
American Goldfinch	226
House Sparrow	55

Mallard x Black Hybrid	1
Scaup species	108
Gull species	22

Total Species **60**
Total Individuals **9425**

Additional Species During Count Week

Bohemian Waxwing	✓
Common Grackle	✓
other	<u>0</u>
Total	2

Additional Species During Count Period

Great Blue Heron	✓
other	0
other	<u>0</u>
Total	1

Total Species, Count Period **63**

Observers

field	33
feeders	<u>14</u>
Total	47

party hours by car	52
party hours on foot	<u>26</u>
Total Party hours	78

km by car	554
km on foot	<u>57</u>
Total Km	611

Notes:

Compilers: Ann & Donald MacPhail; dm@qcca.ca

List of Participants

Saint John Christmas Bird Count - 2019

Field Participants

Mike Bamford - plus 1
Richard Blacquiere
Suzanne Bonnell
Katie Breneol
Paul Clark
Keith Dewar
Holly Haines
Kelly Honeyman
Madeline Honeyman
Frank Kelly
Marta Kelly
Janet Kempster
Don McAlpine
Lynne McAlpine
David McCormick
Harvey McLeod
Paul Mansz
David Mansz
Rick Peacock
Joan Pearce
David Putt
Jan Riddell
Ray Riddell
Dave Ross
Jim Russell
Joanne Savage
Carolyn Scarth
Hank Scarth
Ian Stead
Judy Whalen
Sara (Whalen?) - granddaughter from Montreal
Janet Whitehead
Jim Wilson

Feeder Participants

Faye Black
Jeanne Finn-Allen
Ken Jackson
Denise Johnston
Betty Lizotte
Dave McPherson
Ida McPherson
Ngairé Nelson's neighbour
Mary Richard
Mary Richard's daughter
Ernestine Rooney
Marion Sherwood
Arlene Trask
Wendy White
Janet W