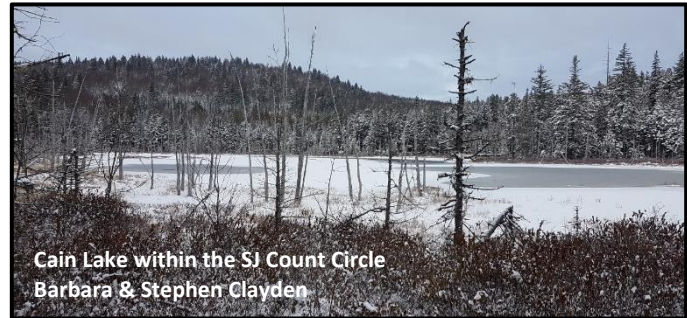


The Saint John New Brunswick (NBSJ) Christmas Bird Count
December 19, 2021
67th Year
(1945, 1946 and 1957 to present)

Right to the punch line: More than 10,000 birds from 84 species were seen within a 24-kilometre diameter circle during Saint John's two darkest weeks of the year. It took 63 people to find them, but I'm still amazed.

All this despite the reports from many observers that there weren't many birds. "Where are all the Hairy Woodpeckers, Blue Jays, nuthatches and finches?"

Numbers of some species were well down and there were no siskins, no crossbills, no Red-bellied Woodpeckers which have been showing up the last few years, only four Pine Grosbeaks and no Snow Buntings. And yet, 500 Snow Buntings were reported from the Springfield area only 35 km away.



Once again there were no Boreal Chickadees, but it was the best year for Canada Jays that I can recall. Eight of them from two different areas and probably 3-4 more that chose to show up in another area only on the day before and the day after the count. Of course!

With 20+ species of warblers being found around here in the summer, it's always interesting to see if any linger to the Christmas count. If any warblers are "usual" in winter, they would be the Yellow-rumped and Pine and both of those were present during the count and count week respectively.

As far as sheer numbers of birds go, we sometimes get to 15,000 individuals, but Richard Blacquiere and his team at the landfill site will tell you that's been achieved on days when the landfill equipment is working and turning stuff over creating lots of delicious food for the gulls and those associated with them. Even in a non-operating state like this year, the landfill yielded 800 gulls, 43 Common Ravens, 639 American Crows, 45 Bald Eagles and almost 1800 European Starlings – overall, one-third of the birds seen within the count circle.



Some of the unusual species this year include Blue-winged Teal, 10 Barrow's Goldeneye, 2 American Coot that had been at Rockwood Park for the last several weeks and several predator species – American Kestrel, Snowy Owl, Short-eared Owl and a Northern Shrike within the city. My wife and I were glad to find a Hermit Thrush thinking it might be the only one for the count; turn turns out there were four in town for the holidays.

The most unusual species this year is not even a recognized species in New Brunswick yet – a Slaty-backed Gull that was observed for a couple of days at the landfill site starting on December 30. Almost as large as a Great Black-backed, this species normally winters from southern Japan to Hong Kong, but occasionally shows up in the northern parts of North America. It will likely be accepted as a new species by the Bird Records Committee, retroactive to the date that it was first observed, so it is included on the list here.

We had several new participants this year – Cynthia, Patricia, Gordon, Evan, Penny, Chrissy, Derrick and Ryan. Hopefully they found it a rewarding experience and will be back for more.

Thanks to everyone for participating. There is no date set for the 2022 count yet but the weather is forecast to be almost perfect. And, if the landfill fans get their way, it will be on a day when the dump is open.

Saint John Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 19, 2021

Species	Number of Individuals
Canada Goose	108
Wood Duck	2
Gadwall	2
American Wigeon	2
American Black Duck	599
Mallard	900
Blue-winged Teal	1
Northern Pintail	4
Green-winged Teal	9
Ring-necked Duck	25
Greater Scaup	58
Lesser Scaup	6
White-winged Scoter	4
Bufflehead	247
Common Goldeneye	62
Barrow's Goldeneye	10
Hooded Merganser	24
Common Merganser	8
Red-breasted Merganser	57
Ruffed Grouse	1
Red-throated Loon	3
Common Loon	8
Double-crested Cormorant	1
Turkey Vulture	28
Bald Eagle	68
Northern Harrier	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2
Northern Goshawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	3
American Kestrel	1
Merlin	1
American Coot	2
Ring-billed Gull	146
Herring Gull	1515
Iceland Gull	60
Great Black-backed Gull	70
Rock Pigeon	576
Mourning Dove	278
Great-horned Owl	1
Snowy Owl	1
Short-eared Owl	1
Downy Woodpecker	39
Hairy Woodpecker	14
Northern Flicker	2
Pileated Woodpecker	4
Northern Shrike	1
Canada Jay	8
Blue Jay	94
American Crow	1190
Common Raven	85
Black-capped Chickadee	677
Red-breasted Nuthatch	39
White-breasted Nuthatch	6
Brown Creeper	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	23
Hermit Thrush	4
American Robin	70
European Starling	2607
Bohemian Waxwing	15
Cedar Waxwing	7
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
American Tree Sparrow	4
Fox Sparrow	1

Song Sparrow	6
White-throated Sparrow	2
Dark-eyed Junco	66
Northern Cardinal	49
Common Grackle	1
Baltimore Oriole	3
Pine Grosbeak	4
Purple Finch	1
House Finch	3
Common Redpoll	6
American Goldfinch	214
House Sparrow	36

Partially identified species

Mallard x Black Duck Hybrid	1
Merganser species	1
Duck species	40
Hawk species	3
Gull species	132
Blackbird species	2
Counted as additional species	0

Total Species 75
Total Individuals 10358

Additional during Count Week

Great Blue Heron - Grand Bay wastewater lagoon	1
Cooper's Hawk - Island View West (SJ West)	1
Common Eider - seen around	1
Total	3

Additional during Count Period

Pine Warbler - Dec 28 - SJ North	1
Horned Grebe - Dec 30 - Seaside Park	1
Glaucous Gull - Dec 30 - SJ land fill	1
Slaty-backed Gull - Dec 30 - SJ land fill	1
Peregrine Falcon - Dec 30 - SJ wastewater lagoon	1
Red-necked Grebe - Jan 3 - Tin Can Beach	1
Total	6

TOTAL SPECIES, COUNT
DAY, WEEK & PERIOD 84

People

field observers	41
feeder observers (if not also in field)	22
Total Observers	63

Party hours by car	56
Party hours on foot	39
Total Party hours	95

Km by car	584
Km on foot	77
Total Km	660

Environmental

Weather: -8 by the coast to -5 inland in the morning, rising by about 3 degrees in both areas by late afternoon then cooling again; clear skies by the coast, overcast with bits of sun inland; fairly heavy snow until late morning; winds 5-15 kmh; previous weeks mild

Ground & water conditions: Fresh water bodies mostly frozen, running water mostly unfrozen. Snow cover 5 centimeters all within previous 24 hours

**Christmas Bird Count Participants
Saint John (NBSJ) Count
December 19, 2021**

Evan Baker
Michael Bamford
Michelle Banks
Rick Barlow
Richard Blacquiére
Faye Black
Karla Bonnell
Suzanne Bonnell
Penny Christensen
Paul Clark
Barbara Clayden
Stephen Clayden
Chrissy Cusack
Becky Daigle
Keith Dewar
Patricia Driscoll
Cynthia Gallagher
Gordon Hollway
Madeline Honeyman
Denise Johnston
Doris Johnston
Holly Haines
Kelly Honeyman
Frank Kelly
Marta Kelly
Paddy Kyle
Betty Lizotte
Ann MacPhail
Donald MacPhail
David MacPherson
Ida MacPherson

Leo Maloney
David Mansz
Paul Mansz
Don McAlpine
Lynne McAlpine
Harvey McLeod
Terry McNeill
Derrick Mitchell
Gail Moore
Ngairé Nelson
Kurt Peacock
Rick Peacock
Joan Pearce
Ryan Power
David Putt
Jan Riddell
Ray Riddell
Don Robinson
Dave Ross
Jim Russell
Joanne Savage
Sue Shedd
Jacob Shipley
Ian Stead
Rosalie Weeks
Judy Whalen
Wendy White
Janet Whitehead
Jim Wilson (Count Period contributor)
Mitzi Withers