

**106th Audubon Christmas Bird Count: Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir
December 17, 2005**

Twenty-three observers in eight field parties, and one feeder watcher, recorded **69 species** and **8,859 individuals** during our annual survey of this 15-mile diameter count circle centered at the Ulster County Community College in Stone Ridge. This represents an above average count, exceeding last year's totals by five species and 2,704 individuals. Temperatures ranged from 17-34 ° (F) under mostly clear skies with little to no wind. Snow cover was 100 percent, averaging 3-5" in depth with a hard crust. Major bodies of water were completely open, small ponds ranged from open to entirely frozen.

Highlights from this year's count include 3 Wood Ducks, 1 Green-winged Teal, 5 Horned Grebes, 37 Black Vultures, 2 Red-shouldered Hawks, 43 Red-tailed Hawks, 7 Belted Kingfishers, 10 Common Ravens, 34 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 35 Carolina Wrens, 99 Eastern Bluebirds, 3 Hermit Thrush, 30 Northern Mockingbirds, 1 Eastern Towhee, 2 Chipping Sparrows, 1 Fox Sparrow, and 80 Song Sparrows. All three regularly occurring owl species were represented; Snow Buntings and Horned Larks were present in small numbers, and three individual blackbirds and one Yellow-rumped Warbler lingered in the count area.

Fifteen species were detected in every sector of the circle, eight additional species were detected in seven of eight sectors, and seventeen species were represented in just one sector. With the exception of one Purple Finch, winter finches were noticeably absent again this year; and despite two separate surveys of the Loughran Road marsh in the town of Esopus, Red-headed Woodpecker was not detected on their summer breeding grounds.

Twelve participants met at the Stadium Diner in Kingston for the post-count compilation dinner, where Hans Weber related a remarkable site witnessed by his field party. While surveying the grounds of a pheasant farm, the group observed two Ring-necked Pheasants outside of the cages and one being carried off in the talons of a Cooper's Hawk! Peter Schoenberger noted an active beaver in his sector, and Frank Murphy and I were treated to the spectacle of a Hermit Thrush and a male Eastern Bluebird perched on a sunlit winterberry holly adorned with a multitude of bright red berries against a snow-white background.

The following table summarizes the count results by sector, followed by area descriptions, observer, and effort information.

Steve M. Chorvas – compiler

Species	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Canada Goose	1292		27	3	214	75	784	21	168
Mute Swan	11						11		
Wood Duck	3								3
American Black Duck	43			1			37	5	
Mallard	340		2	37	3	11	204	13	70
Green-winged Teal	1						1		
Hooded Merganser	11			6	4		1		
Common Merganser	9			1		5	3		
Ring-necked Pheasant	3				1				2
Wild Turkey	67		34		1			30	2
Horned Grebe	5						5		
Great Blue Heron	1			1					
Black Vulture	37		18*	19*					
Turkey Vulture	7		3	4					
Bald Eagle	1					1			

Species	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Northern Cardinal	149		10	32	28	17	26	12	24
Red-winged Blackbird	2				2				
Common Grackle	1					1			
Purple Finch	1					1			
House Finch	163	4	25	43	29	27	3	9	23
American Goldfinch	189	7	6	27	21	19	44	6	59
House Sparrow	591		81	188	85	91	28	51	67
Total Species	69	18	31	43	40	31	49	29	39
Total Individuals	8859	187	973*	1265*	962	935	2235	594	1661

* 37 Black Vultures observed by two field parties (#2 and #3) recorded as 18 and 19 respectively.

cw = count week.

Area Description and Observers	Party Hours			Party Miles				
	On Foot	By Car	Total	On Foot	By Car	Total		
Area 1: Mohonk Lake Paul Huth, Lynn & Allan Bowdery, Tom Sarro.	1.75	2.75	4.5	1	5	6		
Area 2: West of Walkill River (New Paltz to Rosendale) Selden Spencer, Bea Conover, John Kenney.	1	5	6	2	41	43		
	Nocturnal Owling		1.5	10.5				
Area 3: East of Walkill River (New Paltz to Eddyville) Hans Weber, Lin Fagan, Christine Guarino.	1	8	9	.5	48.5	49		
	Feeder Watch		1	1				
Area 4: Hurley/Kingston Mark DeDea, Julie Noble, Mary Jo Wiltshire.	1.5	6.5	8	3	50	53		
	Nocturnal Owling		2.75	29				
Area 5: High Falls/Alligerville Evelyn & Bob Rifenburg, Jayne Dean, Charles Woodruff.	1	6.75	7.75	1	44	45		
Area 6: Ashokan Reservoir/Lomontville Steve Chorvas, Frank Murphy.	1.5	8	9.5	1	48.5	49.5		
	Nocturnal Owling		2.5	18.5				
Area 7: Marbletown Glen Van Gorden, Jeff Nerp.	2	6	8	4	40	44		
	Nocturnal Owling		.5	.25				
Area 8: Kripplebush/Accord Peter Schoenberger, Henry Halama.	4	5.25	9.25	3	69	72		
Field Observers - 23	Total Daylight Effort →		13.75	48.25	62	15.5	346	361.5
Feeder Watchers - 1	Total Nocturnal Effort →		8.25		59.25			

Note: The 2006 Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir CBC is scheduled for Saturday, December 16, 2006.