

113th Audubon Christmas Bird Count [Revised]

The 63rd annual **Mohonk Lake-Ashokan Reservoir** (Ulster County) Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was conducted on Saturday, 15 December 2012. A total of **10,464 individuals** of **79 species** (plus two additional count week species) were recorded by ten field parties under very pleasant weather and field conditions.

Temperatures were relatively mild for this mid-December census, ranging from an overnight low of 24° (F) to an afternoon high of 43° (F) on the Lomontville Flats in Hurley. Winds were calm throughout the count period. Night skies were clear but dark due to the phase of the moon, followed by mostly sunny skies early morning with an increase in clouds mid-day. No snow cover was recorded within the count area. Major bodies of water and fast moving creeks and streams were predominantly open, with smaller ponds and stagnant marshes frozen to various degrees, ranging from entirely frozen to partially open, providing small pockets or larger areas of open water.

Diversity was very good, equaling our all-time high of 79 species in 2007, exceeding last year's total of 74 species, and well above the most recent 10-year average of 67 species. Total number of individuals was well below our maximum of 16,092 in 2008, but otherwise consistent with recent years and only 322 individuals short of last year's tally.

Highlights this year were dominated by waterfowl, raptors, and a warbler, including the addition of two new species to the 63-year composite. A remarkable overwintering **Ovenbird** was photographed in Rifton at the Woodcrest Bruderhof Community, and two lingering **Northern Pintail** on a small pond off CR 2 in Krumville represent first records and advance the historical total to 145 species. The same Krumville pond also hosted four **Green-winged Teal**, only the second time this species has been detected during this count. Three **American Wigeon** on Stone Ridge Pond off Mill Dam Road in Stone Ridge represent our third historical record, one **Wood Duck** in the Esopus Creek off Hurley Mountain Road represented a fourth record for the count, and one **Gadwall** and a count week **Lesser Scaup**, both observed on Stone Ridge Pond, were encountered for only the fifth time in the history of this CBC.

A lone **Long-eared Owl** in Accord, and one **Northern Saw-whet Owl** in Krumville were detected for only the fourth time. One **Peregrine Falcon** in the Fairview Cemetery in Marbletown was observed for only the second historical NYML CBC record. Two **American Pipits** were encountered for a fifth overall record, one **Red-headed Woodpecker** was observed in the Weston Road swamp, and a count week **Iceland Gull** (first winter) was observed at Mohonk Preserve on the Monday following the count.

New high counts were set for several species, including 425 **Snow Geese** (eclipsing 286 in 2008), 5 **Red-shouldered Hawks** (eclipsing 4 in 2010), 9 **Belted Kingfishers** (eclipsing 8 in 2006), 8 **Winter Wrens** (exceeding last year's record 6), 61 **Carolina Wrens** (eclipsing 53 in 2010), and 180 **Song Sparrows** (eclipsing last year's record 123). **Great Blue Herons** equaled our previous high count of 11 in 1998, **Cooper's Hawks** tied last year's record high of 8, and 145 **Eastern Bluebirds** tied our previous high count from 2006.

The much anticipated and publicized winter finch irruption was not significantly realized in the count circle results. No Pine Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, or Evening Grosbeaks were detected. A small number of **Red Crossbills** were recorded in two sections (3 and 4 individuals, representing our fourth historical record), and one field party heard at least two **White-winged Crossbills** fly overhead, representing our fifth overall record. A total of 15 **Common Redpolls** were scattered throughout three sections (in groups of 3, 5, and 7 individuals), and only one **Purple Finch** was found on count day. A surprisingly few 15 **Red-winged Blackbirds** were the only representative of the blackbird family, and 19 **American Robins** seemed a disappointingly low number during this regionally mild December.

One unidentified passerine was described as a “very active chunky greenish bird with a boldly striped orange crown”. The observer’s impression at the time was that of a warbler, indicating that the bird appeared too large for a kinglet in comparison to nearby juncos, and otherwise too drab and lacking detailed wing bars. Another field party observed a silent crow that was described as “significantly smaller and shorter billed than other surrounding crows”. After review and consultation with the field observers, these two accounts were recorded as unidentified *warbler/kinglet species* and *crow species* respectively.

The following table summarizes the count results by sector, followed by area descriptions, observer, and effort information. Asterisks indicate unusual species for this count circle, "cw" indicates a count-week only species. Thanks to all of the participants for their time and effort, and a very special thanks to Mark DeDea and Kyla Haber for once again providing the facilities, hot food, and beverages for our post-count compilation at Hasbrouck Park in Kingston. Please mark your calendars for next year’s Mohonk Lake-Ashokan Reservoir Christmas Bird Count, scheduled for the traditional first Saturday of the count period, **14 December 2013**.

Steve M. Chorvas

Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir CBC Compiler

63rd Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir (NYML) Christmas Bird Count Sector Summary – December 15, 2012

Total	Species	A	B	C	C2	D	E	F	G	H	M
425	Snow Goose				350	75					
3,034	Canada Goose	118	677	120	106	340	138	1,441	56	38	
9	Mute Swan			4		2	2	1			
1	Wood Duck *							1			
1	Gadwall *							1			
3	American Wigeon *							3			
60	American Black Duck				7			36	2	15	
285	Mallard			13	52	45	13	83	6	73	
2	Northern Pintail *									2	
4	Green-winged Teal *									4	
cw	Lesser Scaup							cw			
2	Common Goldeneye						2				
44	Hooded Merganser				14			30			
40	Common Merganser			3	20	1	14	2			
32	Wild Turkey		12			1			7		12
3	Horned Grebe							3			
11	Great Blue Heron		1	2	1		3	2	1	1	
1	Turkey Vulture									1	
4	Bald Eagle (<i>including age</i>)					1A/1J	1A	1J			
3	Northern Harrier		1						2		
4	Sharp-shinned Hawk			1		1	1			1	
8	Cooper's Hawk				1	3	1		1	1	1
1	<i>Accipiter sp.</i>		1								
5	Red-shouldered Hawk				1				1	2	1
62	Red-tailed Hawk		4	4	4	11	11	6	12	9	1
613	Ring-billed Gull		88			10	2	507	5	1	
37	Herring Gull					8		29			
cw	Iceland Gull	cw									
13	Great Black-backed Gull	1	12								
6	<i>Gull sp.</i>	5			1						
281	Rock Pigeon		35		34	56	4	9	33	110	
284	Mourning Dove	5	22	27	41	11	6	18	83	71	
2	Eastern Screech-Owl							1		1	
2	Great Horned Owl									2	
4	Barred Owl		1			2		1			
1	Long-eared Owl *									1	
1	Northern Saw-whet Owl *									1	
9	Belted Kingfisher			1	3		1	4			
1	Red-headed Woodpecker				1						
37	Red-bellied Woodpecker	3	2	2	4	3	5	7	5	5	1
7	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1		1	1	1		1	1	1
74	Downy Woodpecker	5	3	3	13	14	8	12	8	7	1
22	Hairy Woodpecker	3		1	1	2	7	4	2	2	
3	Northern Flicker					1				2	
18	Pileated Woodpecker	6			1	2	1	4	3	1	
2	American Kestrel								1	1	
1	Peregrine Falcon *								1		
226	Blue Jay	19	8	14	22	27	8	32	34	38	24

63rd Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir (NYML) Christmas Bird Count Sector Summary – December 15, 2012

Total	Species	A	B	C	C2	D	E	F	G	H	M
659	American Crow	15	49	360	42	37	39	59	23	23	12
1	<i>Crow sp.</i>						1				
10	Common Raven	3	1			2		1	1	2	
2	Horned Lark									2	
240	Black-capped Chickadee	12	19	5	31	37	22	60	31	18	5
192	Tufted Titmouse	5	24	5	38	28	21	28	17	15	11
18	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1					1	2	13	
147	White-breasted Nuthatch	11	7	9	32	24	17	20	15	12	
6	Brown Creeper		1		1	1	1	1		1	
8	Winter Wren					3		3	1	1	
61	Carolina Wren	1	1	4	4	16	2	12	10	9	2
11	Golden-crowned Kinglet			2		1	1	3		4	
145	Eastern Bluebird	8	12	3	16	37	28	7	19	7	8
1	Hermit Thrush							1			
19	American Robin				1	2		6	5	5	
31	Northern Mockingbird			2	4	8	2	6	4	3	2
1,292	European Starling	83	66	180	79	53	177	72	318	264	
2	American Pipit *									2	
20	Cedar Waxwing						18		2		
1	Ovenbird *				1						
134	American Tree Sparrow				8	49		39	27	11	
1	Field Sparrow							1			
1	Savannah Sparrow							1			
180	Song Sparrow			15	6	17	1	53	80	8	
11	Swamp Sparrow					6		2	3		
264	White-throated Sparrow	1	2	2	18	118	28	53	7	27	8
586	Dark-eyed Junco	31	73	42	57	68	125	63	27	70	30
158	Northern Cardinal	3	18	3	27	29	14	28	25	10	1
15	Red-winged Blackbird				15						
1	Purple Finch								1		
160	House Finch	2			4	25	4	14	105	6	
7	Red Crossbill *					3				4	
2	White-winged Crossbill *									2	
15	Common Redpoll					7			3	5	
89	American Goldfinch	4	12	17	5	13	8	11	9	10	
285	House Sparrow		8	5	37	97	17	28	48	45	
1	<i>Warbler/Kinglet sp.</i>		1								
10,464	Total Individuals	345	1,163	849	1,104	1,299	755	2,811	1,047	970	121
79	Total Species	22	31	28	41	46	38	51	44	53	17

* Denotes unusual species cw = count week (not included in totals)

63 rd Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir (NYML) Christmas Bird Count - December 15, 2012								
Area Description and Observers (Sector leaders are listed first.)	Daylight Party Hours			Daylight Party Miles			Nocturnal	
	On Foot	By Car	Total	On Foot	By Car	Total	Hours	Miles
Area A: Mohonk Lake John Thompson, Allan Bowdery, Bruce Robertson Corbin Robinson, Doug Robinson, Tom Sarro.	3	3.5	6.5	1	10	11		
Area B: Walkkill River West - New Paltz to Rosendale Bea Conover, Annie Mardiney, Jim Marks.	1.25	6.5	7.75	0.75	39.7	40.45		
Area C: Walkkill River East - New Paltz Christine Guarino.	4	0.75	4.75	0.5	19.3	19.8		
Area C2: Ulster Park Lin Fagan, David Arner, Lynn Bowdery, Maeve Maurer.	1	8.25	9.25	1	46	47		
Area D: Hurley/Kingston Mark DeDea, Alan Beebe, Eileen Cunningham, Jessica Prockup, Donna Seymour, Alan Spivack.	4	5.5	9.5	4.5	65.3	69.8	3	46.9
Area E: High Falls/Alligerville Evelyn and Bob Rifenburg, Matt Corsaro, Mira Bowin, Paul Comstock, Lisa Weinstein.	1	6	7	2	54	56		
Area F: Hurley/Lomontville Steve Chorvas, Deb Ferguson, Frank Murphy.	5.5	3.5	9	3	40	43	2.75	22
Area G: Marbletown Glen VanGorden, Jeff Nerp, Dan Porter, Dave Nyzio.	4	4.5	8.5	4	43	47	1	0.5
Area H: Kripplebush/Accord Peter Schoenberger, Susan Rogers.	4	6	10	4.5	73	77.5	2	25.4
Area M: Clove Valley Matt Corsaro, Mira Bowin, Paul Comstock, Lisa Weinstein. (Effort included w/ Area E)								
Field Observers: 35 Feeder Watchers: 0 Total Effort	27.75	44.5	72.25	21.25	390.3	411.55	8.75	94.8

SAVE THE DATE – The **2013** Mohonk Lake/Ashokan Reservoir Christmas Bird Count will be conducted on **Saturday, December 14, 2013.**