

January 13, 2007

Ulster County – Narrative

In conjunction with the annual New York State Ornithological Association's Winter Waterfowl Count, eighteen observers in six field parties participated in the Ulster County segment of this state-wide survey of significant waterfowl habitat, recording a total of **14 species** and **4,563 individuals**.

Weather and field conditions were less than ideal once again this year, with light rain showers persisting throughout the morning, and a dark ominous overcast looming over the remainder of the day. Temperatures were pleasantly mild, ranging from 40 - 50 degrees (F), with calm winds and little or no fog. Virtually all bodies of water were 100% open; moving streams and creeks were at average levels and flowing moderately in their channels.

We exceeded last year's diversity by one species, but numbers of individuals fell considerably short of the 7,094 recorded in 2006. Field observers noted a discernable absence of concentrated rafts of waterfowl, attributed to the availability of extensive open water throughout the county and the region. A total lack of snow cover over the numerous area cornfields resulted in a plentiful, but widespread food resource for wintering fowl. Small ponds, reservoirs, and marshes, typically frozen at this time of the year, contributed only a small number of individuals and one unusual species to the overall census.

Highlights of the 8.5-hour effort include 1 Double-crested Cormorant, 11 Wood Ducks, 2 American Wigeon, 63 American Black Ducks, 10 Ring-necked Ducks, 19 Hooded Mergansers, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, and 12 Horned Grebes. The cormorant and Ring-necked Ducks are unusual for Ulster County at this time of the year.

The extent of open water throughout the region also likely contributed to the total absence of Bald Eagles during the count. High numbers of Herring Gulls, several Great Black-backed Gulls, and numerous Ring-billed Gulls were encountered on various waterways, otherwise no unusual gull species were reported. Belted Kingfishers and Great Blue Herons were reported from numerous locations. A Red-shouldered Hawk in Glenerie, Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Kingston Point, Hermit Thrushes in Esopus Bend Nature Preserve and one at Rider Park, and Purple Finches at Bristol Beach State Park provided some additional interest. The best sight of the day honors go to Mark DeDea's observation of a coyote swimming across the Esopus Creek in the Town of Ulster.

The Hudson River was surveyed from Bristol Beach State Park (Saugerties), Malden Park, Saugerties Lighthouse, Glasco Riverfront Park, Ulster Landing County Park, Rider Park, Ulster Town Park, Immigrant's Way, Kingston Point, Kingston Rotary Park, Sleightsburgh, Port Ewen Beach, River Road (Esopus), Esopus Meadows, Lamont Landing, Black Creek confluence, Mid-Hudson Bridge (Highland), and North Road (Milton).

Additional areas surveyed include The Great Vly in Saugerties; Esopus Creek from the Ashokan Reservoir outflow to confluence with Hudson River; Wallkill River from the Orange County line to confluence with Rondout Creek; Rondout Creek; Sawkill Creek; Plattekill Creek from the Ulster County line south; Black Creek; Ashokan Reservoir; Lower Rondout Reservoir (Ulster County); Saugerties Reservoir; Kingston Reservoirs #1 and #4; Cooper Lake; Williams Lake; Binnewater Lakes; Kenozia Lake; Onteora Lake; Wilson State Park, Yankee Town Pond, Sturgeon Pool; North Road Pond; Chodikee Lake; Lily Lake; Harcourt Wildlife Sanctuary; Humpo Marsh; Stone Ridge Pond on Mill Dam Road; and several miscellaneous ponds and farm fields.

No neck-banded geese or swans were encountered. One field party (Sector A) reported observing waterfowl at two public feeding locations (A-5 and A-7). Field effort, area descriptions, and a detailed count analysis are summarized on the following pages.

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Steve Chorvas

#	Area Surveyed – Sector A	Start Time	End Time
1	Saugerties Reservoir	08:00 AM	08:10 AM
2	The Great Vly WMA	08:20 AM	09:00 AM
3	Bristol Beach State Park – Hudson River	09:15 AM	09:45 AM
4	Malden Park (STP) – Hudson River	09:55 AM	10:10 AM
5	Lower Esopus Creek (Lighthouse Drive) Public feeding site	10:15 AM	10:30 AM
6	Saugerties Lighthouse – Hudson River	10:30 AM	11:10 AM
7	Saugerties Beach – Esopus Creek Public feeding site	11:15 AM	11:25 PM
8	Esopus Bend Nature Preserve	11:30 PM	12:15 PM
9	Glasco Riverfront Park (STP) – Hudson River	12:25 PM	12:40 PM
10	Glenerie Falls (Esopus Creek at PVI bridge south to Falls)	12:45 PM	12:55 PM

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
131	Canada Goose			1					130			
8	Mute Swan			6					2			
2	American Black Duck			2								
63	Mallard						49	6	8			
3	Common Goldeneye										3	
16	Common Merganser				1	11	1				3	
1	Red-breasted Merganser					1						
2	Unidentified			2								
	Total Individuals / Area			11	1	12	50	6	140		6	

#	Area Surveyed – Sector A	Start Time	End Time
11	Wynkoop Road Bridge – Esopus Creek	01:10 PM	01:15 PM
12	Lomontville Flats (Hurley Mountain Road Cornfields)	01:15 PM	01:30 PM
13	Fording Place and holding ponds – Esopus Creek	01:30 PM	01:45 PM
14	Stone Ridge Pond (Mill Dam Road)	01:55 PM	02:25 PM
15	Ashokan Spillway Beaver Pond	02:40 PM	03:00 PM
16	Ashokan Reservoir – Esopus Outflow (Spillway Road)	03:05 PM	03:15 PM
17	Ashokan Reservoir – Lower Basin	03:25 PM	04:00 PM
18	Ashokan Reservoir – Upper Basin	04:05 PM	04:10 PM
19	Kenzioia Lake	04:15 PM	04:25 PM
20	Onteora Lake	04:30 PM	04:40 PM

Total	Species	Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
107	Canada Goose			30		50	22				5	
5	Mute Swan			2		3						
2	American Wigeon					2						
40	American Black Duck					7			27		6	
304	Mallard					300	4					
1	Mallard x Black					1						
4	Ring-necked Duck										4	
2	Common Goldeneye										2	
10	Hooded Merganser			1		4	5					
4	Common Merganser			2							2	
12	Horned Grebe								12			
	Total Individuals / Area			35		367	31		39		19	
717	SECTOR TOTALS		Species: 11		Notes:							

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Mark Dedeo, Alan Beebe, Bob DeDea, Mary Jo Wilshire

#	Area Surveyed – Sector B	Start Time	End Time
1	Farm To Market Road – Esopus Creek	08:00 AM	08:05 AM
2	Rt. 209 (Ulster Town Hall)	08:10 AM	08:15 AM
3	Glenerie Blvd. – Esopus Creek	08:25 AM	08:30 AM
4	Clint Finger Road – Esopus Creek	08:40 AM	08:45 AM
5	Kingston Point Beach – Hudson River	09:00 AM	09:15 AM
6	Ulster Landing Park – Hudson River	09:25 AM	09:45 AM
7	Rider Park, Town of Ulster – Hudson River	09:50 AM	10:00 AM
8	Post Park, Town of Ulster – Hudson River	10:05 AM	10:35 AM
9	Immigrant’s Way (Tilcon Area) – Hudson River	10:40 AM	11:00 AM
10	Rt. 209 (Ulster Town Hall)	11:10 AM	11:15 AM

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
56	Canada Goose									56		
5	Mallard						5					
12	Common Goldeneye						11		1			
2	Common Merganser				2							
	Total Individuals / Area				2		16		1	56		

#	Area Surveyed – Sector B	Start Time	End Time
11	Dutch Village Walk – Esopus Creek	11:20 AM	11:30 AM
12	Thruway Bridge (Tourism Caboose)	11:35 AM	11:40 AM
13	Kingston Point Lagoon and Point	11:55 AM	01:00 PM
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

Total	Species	Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
6	Canada Goose		6									
13	American Black Duck				13							
2	Mallard				2							
1	Common Merganser				1							
	Total Individuals / Area		6		16							
97	SECTOR TOTALS		Species: 5		Notes:							

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Lynn and Allan Bowdery, Ruth Elwell

#	Area Surveyed – Sector C	Start Time	End Time
1	Esopus Meadows to Sleightsburg - Hudson River	08:30 AM	09:30 AM
2	Field – Million Dollar Farm, Springtown Road, New Paltz	12:25 PM	
3	Field – Morning Calm Farm, Springtown Road, New Paltz	12:28 PM	
4	South side of the Rondout Creek east of Rt. 32 N on James Street	01:45 PM	02:05 PM
5	North side of the Rondout Creek east of Rt. 32 N on Creeklocks Road to Rt. 213	02:06 PM	02:27 PM
6	New Salem Lake and area behind the Marina	02:28 PM	02:46 PM
7	Abeel Street along the Rondout Creek from bridge at Eddyville to Millen’s on the Strand	02:47 PM	03:12 PM
8	Mountain Hill Road/Cutler Hill Road back to Rt. 23 N at DeWitt Mill Road		
9	Field – Walkill View Farm, Libertyville Road, New Paltz	04:40 PM	
10	Field – Agriculture Research, Libertyville Road, New Paltz	04:46 PM	

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
585	Canada Goose		31	19	47		8				38	442
1	Mute Swan						1					
3	Wood Duck		3									
36	Mallard					2	7	19	8			
5	Mallard x Black								5			
5	Bufflehead		5									
63	Common Goldeneye		63									
8	Common Merganser		7						1			
	Total Individuals / Area		109	19	47	2	16	19	14		38	442
706	SECTOR TOTALS		Species: 8		Notes: Stop #8 omitted.							

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Carol Weber, Tom Crepet, Jane Vecchione

#	Area Surveyed – Sector D	Start Time	End Time
1	Route 208 Pond, Gardiner (south of Dressel's)	09:40 AM	
2	Route 32 Pond, Modena (near Horse-back Riding Ranch)	09:45 AM	
3	Harcourt Wildlife Sanctuary, New Paltz	10:15 AM	
4	Humpo Marsh, New Paltz	10:53 AM	
5	Black Creek	11:50 AM	
6	Loughran Lane Marsh	12:00 AM	
7	Lamont Landing (Esopus) – Hudson River	12:15 PM	12:30 PM
8	Winding Brook Road – Black Creek and Hudson River	01:25 PM	02:05 PM
9	Louis Valli Road Pond, West Park	02:13 PM	
10	Mariner's Restaurant, Highland	02:40 PM	

Total	Species Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	Canada Goose		1		1					2	
1	American Black Duck			1							
41	Mallard	3		1	22					15	
1	Common Merganser				1						
1	Red-breasted Merganser							1			
1	Double-crested Cormorant								1		
	Total Individuals / Area	3	1	2	24			1	1	17	

#	Area Surveyed – Sector D	Start Time	End Time
11	Valley Vista Nursing Home Pond, Highland	03:04 PM	
12	North Road Pond, Milton	03:28 PM	
13	Buttermilk Inn and Spa Pond, Milton	03:30 PM	03:35 PM
14	Chodikey Lake, Highland	04:10 PM	
15	Lily Lake, Highland	04:20 PM	
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

Total	Species Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
36	Canada Goose	2	34								
2	Mute Swan		2								
1	American Black Duck		1								
58	Mallard		58								
	Total Individuals / Area	2	95								
146	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 7		Notes:							

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Selden Spencer, Bea Conover, Irene Warshauer

#	Area Surveyed – Sector E	Start Time	End Time
1	Walkill River – Walkill above and below dam	09:00 AM	
2	Shawangunk Creek / Walkill River confluence (Yogi Bear Park)		
3	Walkill Prison Grounds		
4	Watch Tower Farms		
5	Walkill River Flats at New Paltz		
6	Walkill River north of bridge		
7	Rondout Creek – Rosendale, west of the Rt. 32 bridge		02:00 PM
8			
9			
10			

Total	Species Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1111	Canada Goose	21		300	165	619		6			
9	Mallard	6					1	2			
9	Common Merganser	8					1				
	Total Individuals / Area	35		300	165	619	2	8			
1129	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 3		Notes:							

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Evelyn and Bob Rifenburg, Wyatt Smith

#	Area Surveyed – Sector F	Start Time	End Time
1	Coopers Lake	09:15 AM	09:30 AM
2	Binnewater Lake	10:30 AM	10:40 AM
3	Williams Lake	10:45 AM	11:10 AM
4	Rondout Creek - toward Feather Farm	11:15 AM	11:40 AM
5	Rest Plaus Road (by old Mill)	11:45 AM	11:50 AM
6	Feather Farm	11:50 AM	12:00 AM
7	Alligerville Bridge	12:25 PM	12:28 PM
8	Accord Bridge (Rt. 209)	12:35 PM	12:38 PM
9	Route 209 Flats (near Kripplebush/Samsonville Junction)	12:42 PM	12:50 PM
10	High Falls Power Plant	01:05 PM	01:10 PM

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1021	Canada Goose					500					500	21
2	Mute Swan			2								
2	American Black Duck						2					
13	Mallard		11			2						
6	Ring-necked Duck				5	1						
15	Common Merganser		14		1							
	Total Individuals / Area		25	2	6	503	2				500	21

#	Area Surveyed – Sector F	Start Time	End Time
11	Esopus Creek - Lake Katrine, Leggs Mills Bridge	01:30 PM	01:40 PM
12	Esopus Creek - Lake Katrine (Van Etten Lane)	01:43 PM	02:00 PM
13	Bennekill Pond, Lake Katrine (by Esopus Creek)	02:01 PM	02:10 PM
14	Sawkill Road - Sawkill Creek	02:30 PM	
15	Kingston Reservoir #1	02:40 PM	02:45 PM
16	Kingston Reservoir #4	02:50 PM	03:05 PM
17	Sawkill Creek - Zena Bridge	03:10 PM	
18	Field - John Joy Road beyond Zena Bridge	03:10 PM	03:15 PM
19			
20			

Total	Species	Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
654	Canada Goose				600		2			52		
2	Mute Swan				2							
6	Wood Duck				6							
12	Mallard			8			4					
9	Hooded Merganser				3			6				
2	Common Merganser							2				
	Total Individuals / Area			8	611		6	8		52		
1744	SECTOR TOTALS		Species: 8		Notes:							

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Ulster County – Field Effort, Area Descriptions, and Count Analysis

Observers: Henry Halama

#	Area Surveyed – Sector G (Miscellaneous Reports)	Start Time	End Time
1	Wilson State Park	01:00 PM	
2	Yankee Town Pond		03:00 PM
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	Wood Duck			2								
4	American Black Duck			4								
18	Mallard		18									
	Total Individuals / Area		18	6								
24	SECTOR TOTALS		Species: 3		Notes:							