

New York State Winter Waterfowl Count Report – 2011

Ulster County – January 15, 2011

Nine participants in four field parties conducted the Ulster County segment of the annual New York State (NYSOA) January Waterfowl Count on Saturday, 15 January, encountering a total of **2,940 individuals** of **8 species** (+ 1 hybrid) during a 9.5-hour effort. Consistently freezing temperatures during the preceding week resulted in relatively few areas of open water and apparently factored in a general scarcity of waterfowl. In comparison to the previous six years that I have compiled this count, the 2011 survey produced our lowest diversity and abundance of waterfowl, well below the six-year average of 13 species and 5,391 individuals, and less than our previously recorded range of 11–17 species and 3,344–7,094 individuals per year with a cumulative total of 19 species of waterfowl represented.

Temperatures dropped to an early morning low of -7 ° (F) at sunrise in New Paltz and climbed to a high of 29 ° (F) by mid-afternoon on the Lomontville Flats. Winds were pleasantly calm throughout the day under cloudy skies early, followed by a few brief interludes of sunshine, and a return to cloudy skies with light snow by late afternoon. Lakes and ponds were generally frozen with occasional small pockets of open water. The Hudson River was predominately solid ice with small scattered areas of open water along the main channel, which had frozen over the previous night and was not disturbed during 3.5 hours of early morning surveying in the north sector. The Wallkill River was generally frozen with occasional areas of open water; Esopus Creek was frozen along calm sections but open and flowing freely in areas of stronger rapids. Excessive upstream reservoir releases created very turbid water and strong currents in the lower Esopus Creek. Moderate fog arising from cold air passing over open areas of warmer water further obscured views of infrequent waterfowl present on major rivers and creeks.

Ashokan Reservoir was 98% frozen with only one small area open at the base of the dividing weir that harbored a few Common Mergansers. Stone Ridge Pond on Mill Dam Road retained approximately 20% open water along the far side and contributed a large number of Mallards (600) and our only Mute Swans (4), but hosted only ten Canada Geese during the observation period and the overall number of waterfowl was relatively small in comparison to recent past years. Agricultural fields were entirely covered with deep (8-12"+) snow, including the grazing pastures at Blue Chip Farm in southern Ulster County where no waterfowl were observed in contrast to the typical presence of large concentrations of geese.

A remarkable 32 Bald Eagles were observed during the waterfowl count by the two Hudson River field parties, including 15 individuals en masse on the river ice off Malden, and five eagles observed from Ulster Landing Park. Some additional non-waterfowl highlights include two White-crowned Sparrows and a Rough-legged Hawk roadside on Sand Hill Road in the Town of Shawangunk; two American Pipits, a Savannah Sparrow, and an American Kestrel out on the Lomontville Flats in Hurley; and two Black Vultures on the Strand in Kingston. Not surprisingly, no Great Blue Herons or Belted Kingfishers were detected this year in the frigid environment, and no banded geese or swans were reported.

The following pages detail our field effort, area descriptions, and specific location counts. Thanks once again to all of the field observers for their fine effort in documenting Ulster County winter waterfowl.

Steve M. Chorvas – compiler

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New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011

Ulster County Area Summary

January 15, 2011

Total	Species	A	B	C	D	E	F	M
1,475	Canada Goose	260	6	23	241	650	295	
4	Mute Swan	4						
27	American Black Duck	6	1		15	2	3	
1,020	Mallard	662	29		67	14	248	
1	<i>Mallard X Black</i>				1			
1	Northern Pintail				1			
11	Common Goldeneye	1		10				
9	Hooded Merganser				8	1		
335	Common Merganser	92	205	7	20	9	2	
27	<i>Unidentified</i>	57						
2,940	Total Individuals	1,082	241	40	353	676	548	
8	Total Species	6	4	3	6	5	4	

32	Bald Eagle (Adult / Juvenile)	3A/15J	4A/6J	0	1A/3J	0	0	
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Waterfowl Count Mute Swans (two adults, two juveniles) on Stone Ridge Pond feeding site – Photo Steve M. Chorvas

New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011

Date: January 15, 2011 Ulster County – NYSOA Region 9

Observers: Steve Chorvas, Alan Beebe	Start: 07:15	End: 04:15
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#	Location Description – Area A	Condition	Start Time	End Time
1	The Great Vly WMA - Saugerties	Frozen	07:15 AM	07:30 AM
2	Hudson River - Bristol Beach State Park	Open pockets	07:40 AM	08:00 AM
3	Hudson River - Malden Park (STP)	Open pockets	08:05 AM	08:45 AM
4	Esopus Creek - Lighthouse Drive (East side below dam) Public feeding site	Frozen	08:50 AM	
5	Hudson River - Latham Circle/ Saugerties Lighthouse Trail	Open pockets	08:55 AM 03:40 PM	09:55 AM 04:15 PM
6	Esopus Creek - Saugerties Beach (above dam) Public feeding site	Frozen	19:58 AM	
7	Esopus Creek - Tina Chorvas Park (West side below dam) Public feeding site	Frozen	10:00 AM	10:10 AM
8	Esopus Creek - Esopus Bend Nature Preserve	Frozen		
9	Hudson River – Falling Waters Preserve (Dominican Sisters)			
10	Hudson River - Glasco Riverfront Park (STP)	Open pockets	10:20 AM	10:40 PM

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
250	Canada Goose				250							
57	Mallard		1		21		32		3			
1	Common Goldeneye						1					
68	Common Merganser				17		51					
57	Other/Unidentified				2		55					
433	Total Individuals / Area		1		290		139		3			

16	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)			1A	2A/13J							
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#	Location Description – Area A	Condition	Start Time	End Time
11	Esopus Creek - Glenerie Falls (PVI bridge south to Falls)	Mostly Open	10:45 AM	11:20 AM
12	Esopus Creek - Wynkoop Road Bridge	Mostly Open	11:35 AM	11:40 AM
13	Esopus Creek - Fording Place (including holding ponds)	Activity / Frozen	11:50 AM	12:30 PM
14	Cornfields - Lomontville Flats (Hurley Mountain Road)	Snow Covered	12:35 PM	
15	Stone Ridge Pond - Mill Dam Road Public feeding site	10% Open	12:45 PM	01:15 PM
16	Ashokan Reservoir Esopus Creek Outflow - Spillway Road	Open pockets	01:35 PM	01:40 PM
17	Beaver Pond - Ashokan Spillway	Frozen	01:45 PM	02:00 PM
18	Ashokan Reservoir - Lower Basin	98 % Frozen	02:05 PM	02:30 PM
19	Ashokan Reservoir - Upper Basin	Frozen	02:40 PM	
20	Kenzioia Lake and Onteora Lake / Saugerties Reservoir	Frozen / Frozen	02:50 PM	03:20 PM

Total	Species	Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
10	Canada Goose						10					
4	Mute Swan						4					
6	American Black Duck		6									
605	Mallard		5				600					
24	Common Merganser		18							6		
649	Total Individuals / Area		29				614			6		

2	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)		1J					1J				
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1,082	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 6	Notes: See below.	Bald Eagles: 3 (Ad) 15 (Juv)
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Notes: 15 Bald Eagles together on small section of river ice viewed from River Rd. just south of Malden STP.

New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011

Date: January 15, 2011 Ulster County – NYSOA Region 9

Observers: Mark DeDea, Susan Rogers, Peter Schoenberger	Start: 07:00	End: 4:30
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#	Location Description – Area B	Condition	Start Time	End Time
1	Pond - Interstate 587	Open	4:02 PM	4:06 PM
2	Esopus Creek - Farm To Market Road	Snow	4:15 PM	4:15 PM
3	Esopus Creek - Rt. 209 (Ulster Town Hall)	75% ice	4:20 PM	4:20 PM
4	Hudson River - Ulster Landing Park	Frozen	7:00 AM	7:30 AM
5	Hudson River - Kingston Point Beach	Channel open	9:00 AM	9:15 AM
6	Hudson River - Kingston Point (including Lagoon)	Frozen	9:15 AM	9:30 AM
7	Hudson River - Immigrant's Way (Tilcon Area)	Frozen	8:35 AM	8:50 AM
8	Hudson River - Post Park, Town of Ulster	Frozen	8:00 AM	8:15 AM
9	Hudson River - Rider Park, Town of Ulster	Frozen	8:15 AM	8:30 AM
10	Esopus Creek - Rt. 209 (Ulster Town Hall)			

Total	Species Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	Canada Goose	6									
1	American Black Duck	1									
29	Mallard	24				5					
205	Common Merganser				178			6	16	5	
241	Total Individuals / Area	31			178	5		6	16	5	31

10	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)				2 A/3J	1J	1J	1A	1J	1A	
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#	Location Description – Area B	Condition	Start Time	End Time
11	Esopus Creek - Clint Finger Road	Frozen	4:30 PM	4:30 PM
12	Esopus Creek - Thruway Bridge (Tourism Caboose)	Frozen	2:42 PM	2:42 PM
13	Esopus Creek - Dutch Village Walk	85% Frozen	2:40 PM	2:40 PM
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Total	Species Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
0	Total Individuals / Area										

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)										
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241	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 4	Notes: See below.	Bald Eagles: 4 (Ad) 6 (Juv)
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Notes: Tough day to find open water (and ducks). I think it was my best day ever for eagles in Ulster County with 14 different birds. Ulster Landing had 2 adults, 2 2nd yr, 1 juv., Kingston Pt had 1 3rd yr, Kingston Pt Lagoon 1 juv., Immigrants Way 1 adult, Post Park 1 juv., Rider Park 1 adult, and Mariner's 1 adult and 3 3rd yr.

New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011
Date: January 15, 2011 Ulster County – NYSOA Region 9

Observers: Lynn and Allan Bowdery	Start: 09:28	End: 11:50
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#	Location Description – Area C	Condition	Start Time	End Time
1	Rondout Creek - South side east of Rt. 32 North on James Street	Mostly frozen	09:28 AM	09:40 AM
2	Rondout Creek - North side east of Rt. 32 North on Creeklocks Rd to Rt. 213	Rapids open	09:40 AM	10:15 AM
3	Rondout Creek - Mountain Hill Rd/Cutler Hill Rd to Rt. 23 North at DeWitt Mill Rd.	Ponds frozen	10:15 AM	10:20 AM
4	New Salem Lake (including area behind Marina)	All frozen	10:21 AM	10:24 AM
5	Rondout Creek - Abeel St. from bridge at Eddyville to Millen's on the Strand	All frozen*	10:25 AM	10:43 AM
6	Hudson River - Sleightsburg	All frozen	10:50 AM	10:52 AM
7	Hudson River - Esopus Town Beach	All frozen	10:54 AM	10:56 AM
8	Hudson River - Esopus Meadows	All frozen	11:00 AM	11:07 AM
9	Sturgeon Pond	All frozen	11:21 AM	11:22 AM
10				

Total	Species	Area →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
23	Canada Goose			23								
10	Common Goldeneye			10								
7	Common Merganser		1	6								
40	Total Individuals / Area		1	39								

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)											
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#	Location Description – Area C	Condition	Start Time	End Time
11	Field - Million Dollar Farm, Springtown Road, New Paltz	Snow covered	09:20 AM	09:20 AM
12	Field - Morning Calm Farm, Springtown Road, New Paltz	Snow covered	09:18 AM	09:18 AM
13	Fields - Flats Rt. 299 and Springtown Road, New Paltz	Snow covered	09:16 AM	09:17 AM
14	Field - Walkill View Farm, Libertyville Road, New Paltz	Snow covered	11:46 AM	11:50 AM
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Total	Species	Area →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
0	Total Individuals / Area											

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)											
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40	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 3	Notes: *no ducks by bubbler at Rip Van Winkle.							Bald Eagles: 0 (Ad) 0 (Juv)		
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New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011

Date: January 15, 2011 Ulster County – NYSOA Region 9

Observers: Mark DeDea, Susan Rogers, Peter Schoenberger	Start: 09:50	End: 01:30
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#	Location Description – Area D	Condition	Start Time	End Time
1	Hudson River - Mt. Saint Alphonsus, Esopus	Frozen	09:50 AM	09:55 AM
2	Hudson River - Lamont Landing, Esopus	Frozen	10:00 AM	10:00 AM
3	Black Creek and Hudson River - Winding Brook Road, Esopus	Mostly Frozen	10:00 AM	10:15 AM
4	Hudson River - Mariner's Restaurant, Highland	Mostly Frozen	10:45 AM	11:00 AM
5	Hudson River - Dock Street, Marlboro	Frozen	11:30 AM	12:00 PM
6	Route 208 Pond - Gardiner (south of Dressel's)			
7	Route 32 Pond - Modena (near Horse-back Riding Ranch)			
8	Humpo Marsh - New Paltz	Frozen	01:25 PM	01:25 PM
9	Harcourt Wildlife Sanctuary - New Paltz	Frozen	01:30 PM	01:30 PM
10				

Total	Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	Canada Goose					11					
10	American Black Duck			10							
59	Mallard			3	56						
1	<i>Mallard X Black</i>				1						
1	Northern Pintail				1						
13	Common Merganser					13					
95	Total Individuals / Area			13	58	24					

4	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)				1 A/3 J						
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#	Location Description – Area D	Condition	Start Time	End Time
11	Field- Marlboro High School	Snow / field	12:10 PM	12:10 PM
12	Farm Pond - Rte. 14 / Idlewild Rd. (Marlboro)	Farm pond	12:13 PM	12:13 PM
13	Denniston Rd. (Gardiner)	Flyover	12:36 PM	12:36 PM
14	Field- Sandhill Rd. (Shawangunk)	Field	12:37 PM	12:37 PM
15	Walkill River - River Rd.	Partial frozen	12:51 PM	01:03 PM
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Total	Species	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
230	Canada Goose	98		3	24	105					
5	American Black Duck					5					
8	Mallard		6			2					
8	Hooded Merganser					8					
7	Common Merganser					7					
258	Total Individuals / Area	98	6	3	24	127					

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)										
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353	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 6	Notes: Pintail hen at Mariner's with Mallards.	Bald Eagles: 1 (Ad) 3 (Juv)
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New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011

Date: January 15, 2011 Ulster County – NYSOA Region 9

Observers: Selden Spencer, Irene Warshauer	Start: 09:00	End: 11:45
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#	Location Description – Area E	Condition	Start Time	End Time
1	Wallkill River - above dam	Frozen	09:00 AM	09:10 AM
2	Wallkill River - below dam	Some Open	09:15 AM	09:20 AM
3	Wallkill River - Lippincott Rd	Some Open	09:20 AM	09:30 AM
4	Field - Blue Chip Farm	Snow Covered	09:30 AM	09:45 AM
5	Wallkill River - Galeville Bridge	Open	10:00 AM	10:20 AM
6	Wallkill River / Shawangunk Creek confluence (Yogi Bear Park)	Open	10:30 AM	10:40 AM
7	Field - Watchtower Farms	Snow Covered	09:45 AM	10:00 AM
8	Wallkill River - Libertyville Rd. south of Fairgrounds	Ice, no birds	10:15 AM	11:20 PM
9	Wallkill River - Flats at New Paltz (from bridge to Libertyville Rd)	Ice	10:30 AM	10:45 AM
10	Wallkill River - north of bridge (includes Rioes Rd cornfield off Springtown Rd)	Ice!!	10:45 AM	11:15 AM

Total	Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
300	Canada Goose		110			40	150				
2	American Black Duck			2							
6	Mallard					6					
1	Hooded Merganser			1							
6	Common Merganser			4		1	1				
315	Total Individuals / Area		110	7		47	151				

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)										
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#	Location Description – Area E	Condition	Start Time	End Time
11	Wallkill River - Perrines Covered Bridge County Park	Frozen	11:15 AM	11:30 AM
12	Rondout Creek - Rosendale (Rt. 32 bridge west to Rt. 213 bridge)	Open	11:30 AM	11:45 AM
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Total	Species	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
350	Canada Goose		350								
8	Mallard		8								
3	Common Merganser		3								
361	Total Individuals / Area		361								

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)										
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676	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 5	Notes: See below.	Bald Eagles: 0 (Ad) 0 (Juv)
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Notes: I was struck by the contrast with previous years. The freezing of slow moving waters, plus deep snows at Blue Chip and Watch Tower Farms apparently caused waterfowl to move eastward toward the Hudson River.

New York State Winter Waterfowl Count – 2011

Date: January 15, 2011 Ulster County – NYSOA Region 9

Observers: Mark DeDea, Peter Schoenberger	Start: 02:00	End: 03:41
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#	Location Description – Area F	Condition	Start Time	End Time
1	Sawkill Creek - Housted Residence (near Zena Cornfield) Feeding site	80% Frozen	3:00 PM	3:20 PM
2	Field - John Joy Rd. (past Zena Bridge)	Snow	3:00 PM	3:00 PM
3	Sawkill Creek - Zena Bridge	90% Frozen	2:42 PM	2:42 PM
4	Kingston Reservoir #4	Frozen	3:25 PM	3:25 PM
5	Kingston Reservoir #1	Frozen	2:40 PM	2:40 PM
6	Sawkill Creek - Sawkill Road	50% Frozen	3:20 PM	3:30 PM
7	Bennekil Pond - Lake Katrine (by Esopus Creek)	Frozen	3:35 PM	3:35 PM
8	Esopus Creek - Lake Katrine (Van Etten Lane)	Frozen	3:35 PM	3:35 PM
9	Esopus Creek - Lake Katrine (Leggs Mills Bridge)	90% Frozen	3:36 PM	3:41 PM
10	Rondout Creek - High Falls Power Plant	80% Frozen	2:00 PM	2:06 PM

Total	Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
120	Canada Goose									120	
3	American Black Duck	2								1	
248	Mallard	226								22	
2	Common Merganser										2
373	Total Individuals / Area	228								143	2

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)										
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#	Location Description – Area F	Condition	Start Time	End Time
11	Field - Rte. 209 Flats (near Kripplebush/Samsonville Junction)	Snow	2:15 PM	2:20 PM
12	Rondout Creek - Accord Bridge (Rt. 209)	90% Frozen	2:25 PM	2:25 PM
13	Rondout Creek - Alligerville Bridge			
14	Rondout Creek - Feather Farm			
15	Rondout Creek - Rest Plaus Road (by old Mill)			
16	Rondout Creek - toward Feather Farm			
17	Williams Lake			
18	Binnewater Lake			
19	Coopers Lake			
20				

Total	Species	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
175	Canada Goose	175									
175	Total Individuals / Area	175									

0	Bald Eagle (Ad/Juv)										
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548	SECTOR TOTALS	Species: 4	Notes: See below.	Bald Eagles: 0 (Ad) 0 (Juv)
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Notes: Housted's residence on Sawkill had a drake Pintail until about a week ago, they do feed every day and it is quite a show!