

Ulster/Dutchess (NYUD) Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, December 27, 2014

The fourth annual Ulster/Dutchess (NYUD) Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, December 27 2014. This year's count was conducted under a favorable setting with temperatures ranging from a low of 31 degrees at our 4:00 AM start time to an afternoon high of 54 degrees. There was absolutely no snow cover and all bodies of water were free of any measurable ice in the count circle. Clear skies and a complete lack of wind made nocturnal efforts quite hospitable. These moderate conditions made for a more enjoyable day in the field but did not exactly translate into big numbers.

Our species total of **86** was slightly above our three year average of 84 but our individual total dropped for the fourth consecutive year to **14,233** birds reported. An inexplicable late hunting season kept several attractive waterfowl locations atypically void of ducks or with extremely anxious birds. Shots were heard all morning along the Hudson River. One field party witnessed "nuisance control" at a golf course and another noted only five of the 49 ducks observed were on the water with the others hurriedly flying about Tivoli Bays. Surprisingly low numbers of American Robins and blackbird species also adversely affected our totals. Mother Nature likely had a hand in this as well without any sense of urgency to move or even congregate species that might generally pad our numbers remained dispersed.

The lack of ice did allow for one Common Loon and six Horned Grebes (new species to the NYUD composite) to remain on the far eastern portion of the Ashokan Reservoir. In the Town of Saugerties another three new species were added to the NYUD composite with a Northern Goshawk, 5 Northern Pintails, and an Eastern Phoebe (presumably partially sustained by an insect hatch that was observed in more than one sector). An Evening Grosbeak in the Town of Rhinebeck and a Ring-necked Duck in the Town of Red Hook also joined the NYUD composite this year. The most unusual addition was a Snowy Owl, not that it was completely unexpected but the manner in which it came to be part of this count; a nonparticipant discovered the bird, a second hand e-bird report was generated, and then a conversation and cell phone image via Facebook the following day to confirm. With amendments this year the NYUD composite now stands at **113** species in it's brief history.

Other interesting or unusual species included Fish Crows in Columbia County, a Wood Duck in West Hurley, a woodcock/snipe species briefly observed in the Town of Ulster, an Orange-crowned Warbler (associating with a lingering Ruby-crowned Kinglet) in Sleightsburg, and winter finches were represented by Pine Siskins in two sectors and two Purple Finches in Saugerties. With conditions as they were, field parties anticipated good sparrow results and although total numbers were not impressive diversity was better than any previous count, with towhee, Field, Chipping, and White-crowned tallied along with the regulars. Owling was rewarding in all sectors that conducted a nocturnal effort including a "sweep" of the three regulars in the Town of Rhinebeck and five Eastern Screech Owls in the greater Tivoli Bays area alone. A few trends seem to be developing as our count matures. A burgeoning winter roost of Black Vultures on the

Bard College Campus swelled to 100 birds this year and Merlin has become our “reliable” falcon species. Count week species this year were Long-tailed Duck, Iceland Gull (who has been in this role before and yet to make count day), and a late addition on the last day of the count week by John Haas who briefly observed, at close range, a male Black and White Warbler he found while visiting Sleightsburg Spit in search of the aforementioned Orange-crowned Warbler.

Thank You to the 46 field observers and three feeder-watchers who thoroughly and productively covered our circle and especially to Steve Chorvas who continues to steward this fledgling count (and correct all my mistakes). Our well attended post count compilation was managed by my beautiful wife Kyla Haber who again did most of the “heavy lifting” and handled days of cooking and baking, blown fuses, a clogged sink, and a 3:00 a.m. alarm with a smile. Thanks also to all those who brought additional food and drink and added to this festive gathering.

Respectively submitted,

Mark DeDea

Co-compiler Ulster/Dutchess (NYUD) CBC

Save the date: 5th annual NYUD CBC Saturday, December 26th 2015

SECTOR “A” WEST SAUGERTIES Bob Miller, Vanessa Lane, George Moxham, Mary Moxham, Wes Finger (fw)

SECTOR “B” SAUGERTIES Steve Chorvas, Alan Beebe, Eileen Cunningham, Deb Ferguson, Frank Murphy, Doreen Beebe (fw)

SECTOR “C” CHEVIOT Gregory Esch, George Rodenhausen

SECTOR “D” KERLEY'S CORNERS Peter Schoenberger, Susan Fox Rogers, Christina Baal, Erin Kelly

SECTOR “E” WOODSTOCK Steve Schuyler, Peter Schuyler, Bruce Nott, Dixon Onderdonk, Ryan Nerp, Glen Van Gorden, Jeff Nerp

SECTOR “F” LAKE KATRINE Lin Fagan, Kathie Mock, Maeve Maurer, David Arner, Bob DeDea (fw)

SECTOR “G” ANNADALE-ON-HUDSON Jess Prockup, Jim Prockup, Steve Bauer, Dan Porter

SECTOR “H” RED HOOK Jim Closs, Dave Grover, Roberta Dopson, Barbara Butler, Dot Fleury, Fred Baumgarten, Mona Payton

SECTOR “I” KINGSTON Mark DeDea, Donna Seymour, Annie Mardiney, Charlotte Adamis

SECTOR "J" RHINEBECK Wendy Tocci, Thom Grady, David Hayes, Deb Kral, Rodney Johnson

NYUD CBC Summary – December 27, 2014

NYUD Christmas Bird Count													
Total	December 27, 2014 (4 / 115th)	A	B1	B2	C	D	E1	E2	F	G	H	I	J
3,829	Canada Goose	641	383	203	105	170	55	474	242	148	892	377	139
9	Mute Swan		6								2	1	
1	Wood Duck						1						
58	American Black Duck	11	5	1		2			13	3	14	8	1
420	Mallard	33	35	36		25		27	73	22	70	51	48
5	Northern Pintail *			5									
1	Ring-necked Duck*					1							
cw	Long-tailed Duck											cw	
4	Bufflehead						1					3	
57	Common Goldeneye						4					53	
11	Hooded Merganser	2		2			5		2				
96	Common Merganser		5	7	7		24		5	24		11	13
20	Wild Turkey				6		4					3	7
1	Common Loon						1						
6	Horned Grebe						6						
4	Great Blue Heron		2	1						1			
103	Black Vulture					3				100			
11	Bald Eagle		2A	2A			1			1A	1	2A1J	1A
3	Northern Harrier									2	1		
8	Sharp-shinned Hawk			1	1	1				3		1	1
6	Cooper's Hawk					3			1			1	1
1	Northern Goshawk	1											
10	Red-shouldered Hawk		1	1		1	2		3			2	
100	Red-tailed Hawk	10	3	4	11	14	1	4	7	12	9	12	13
1	<i>Woodcock/Snipe sp.</i>								1				
214	Ring-billed Gull	1	13	6	22				7	26		136	3
42	Herring Gull									7		33	2
cw	Iceland Gull *											cw	
12	Great Black-backed Gull									1		11	
1	<i>Gull sp.</i>											1	
382	Rock Pigeon	40		2	51	62		98	57	1	10	61	
284	Mourning Dove	18	3	50	20	53	33	26	19	14	16	23	9
13	Eastern Screech-Owl		2		1	1				5		3	1
9	Great Horned Owl		3			3						2	1
1	Snowy Owl *											1	
5	Barred Owl		2			1				1			1
9	Belted Kingfisher		2		1	1	1	1		2			1
126	Red-bellied Woodpecker	9	9	6	14	9	11	4	14	13	17	8	12
13	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	1		1	1				2	1	1	5

NYUD Christmas Bird Count													
Total	December 27, 2014 (4 / 115th)	A	B1	B2	C	D	E1	E2	F	G	H	I	J
149	Downy Woodpecker	7	18	10	9	8	30	3	15	8	18	16	7
48	Hairy Woodpecker	2	9	3	1		6	1	7	7	4	7	1
26	Northern Flicker	1				9	1			2	5	6	2
38	Pileated Woodpecker	4	1	4		8	5	1		9	4		2
2	Merlin *					1						1	
2	Peregrine Falcon *				1								1
1	Eastern Phoebe *		1										
463	Blue Jay	36	36	26	55	56	32	23	55	23	67	17	37
757	American Crow	61	32	14	40	130	20	24	97	25	51	33	230
4	Fish Crow *				4								
13	Common Raven	3					6			1		2	1
62	Horned Lark					62							
498	Black-capped Chickadee	54	63	35	56	20	63	15	37	59	44	38	14
387	Tufted Titmouse	43	36	23	47	21	40	22	37	40	25	28	25
14	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	1				8		1	2			
256	White-breasted Nuthatch	25	20	12	38	18	31	7	19	30	16	14	26
22	Brown Creeper	2	5	2		1	2			7	1	2	
13	Winter Wren	1	5	1						1		4	1
84	Carolina Wren	15	13	6	2	4	7		5	3	6	17	6
24	Golden-crowned Kinglet	3	4	4			2			6	1	4	
1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet											1	
303	Eastern Bluebird	29	14	4	17	24	38	10	29	10	67	17	44
5	Hermit Thrush	1	2									2	
77	American Robin	18	2		29	2			3	2	16	2	3
55	Northern Mockingbird		7	6	1	11		2	8	4	4	8	4
1,675	European Starling	216	106	107	228	226	50	49	210	165	121	108	89
49	Cedar Waxwing							4	2		32	11	
1	Snow Bunting											1	
1	Orange-crowned Warbler *											1	
7	Yellow-rumped Warbler											7	
cw	Black-and-white Warbler*											cw	
1	Eastern Towhee *					1							
191	American Tree Sparrow	3	11	8		22	8	2	16	12	13	34	62
2	Chipping Sparrow *								2				
3	Field Sparrow		1			1							1
6	Savannah Sparrow	4											2
110	Song Sparrow	18	21	8		12		1	1	2	2	27	18
12	Swamp Sparrow	1	2			1						6	2
322	White-throated Sparrow	62	32	14	21	18	45	10	5	21	22	42	30
5	White-crowned Sparrow										5		
955	Dark-eyed Junco	131	57	47	59	64	242	19	85	26	64	39	122
226	Northern Cardinal	21	22	10	11	15	34	12	11	20	33	28	9
37	Red-winged Blackbird					6		1					30
35	Common Grackle	2				13		20					
4	Brown-headed Cowbird	2									2		

NYUD Christmas Bird Count December 27, 2014 (4 / 115th)													
Total		A	B1	B2	C	D	E1	E2	F	G	H	I	J
161	House Finch	18	11	3	7	39	1	17	7		30	11	17
2	Purple Finch		2										
7	Pine Siskin			1									6
260	American Goldfinch	27	18	8	9	18	46	16	26	19	28	37	8
1	Evening Grosbeak												1
980	House Sparrow	28	21	164	93	95	8	117	183	63	52	142	14

14,233	Total Individuals	1,607	1,050	847	968	1,257	875	1,010	1,305	955	1,766	1,519	1,074
86	Total Species (+3 cw)	42	47	39	32	46	38	29	36	46	38	56	49

* unusual species cw = count week
Columns: Dutchess County

Shaded