

Ulster/Dutchess (NYUD) Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, December 28, 2011

Greetings All,

The inaugural Ulster/Dutchess (NYUD) Christmas Bird Count was held Wednesday, December 28th 2011. The circle's center is located at the intersection of Rt. 32 and Hudson River Road in the Town of Saugerties (lat. 42.027995 long. 73.953704). As you can see with the attached map of the new circle it included, nearly thirty miles of Hudson River shoreline, the Tivoli Bays complex, the mouths of two major river tributaries, and various quality green spaces like Esopus Bend Nature Preserve, Ferncliff Forest, Kingston Point Park, Ulster Landing County Park, and Clermont State Park to name just a few. All bodies of water were free of ice and there was no snow cover recorded in the count circle. Temperatures ranged from a high of 46 degrees at the 4:00 am start time to a low of 30 degrees at the 4:45 pm ending time. Wind speeds were not as bad as predicted but gusts occasionally reached 20 mph in the afternoon and definitely impacted the detection of passerines. 13 field parties with 49 observers (along with 2 feederwatchers) in the ten sectors tallied 83 species. Highlights included a Blue-winged Teal, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Lesser Black-backed Gull in the Town of Rhinebeck, two Gray Catbirds at the Esopus Bend Nature Preserve (EBNP), six Pine Siskins in the Town of Woodstock, a Rusty Blackbird in the Town of Red Hook, two Wood Ducks in Tivoli Bays, three Long-tailed Ducks on the Hudson, and an Orange-crowned Warbler, Snow Goose, and Cackling Goose from the Town of Ulster. Two additional species occurred during the count week scouting with a Common Yellowthroat at EBNP and a Merlin in the Town of Ulster. Bald Eagles put on a good showing with 31 individuals counted. Thrushes were also well represented with 164 Eastern Bluebirds counted in all but one sector, 1034 American Robins were counted in all sectors, and the reclusive Hermit Thrush observed in 5 sectors with ten birds total. Blackbirds, still able to forage on corn fields made up approximately a quarter of all individual birds seen including a staggering 6678 Common Grackles. Disappointing misses included Peregrine Falcon, Red-breasted Nuthatch and the Hudson's overall lack of any substantial waterfowl, grebe, and loon numbers or diversity. Highlights are listed below. A complete breakdown of the full days effort can be obtained by contacting me off list. The 2nd annual NYUD CBC will be held on **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH, 2012.**

Respectfully submitted,
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Snow Goose -1
Cackling Goose -1
Wood Duck -2
Green-winged Teal -1
Blue-winged Teal -1
Greater Scaup -1
Long-tailed Duck -3
Hooded Merganser -10
Great Blue Heron -6
Black Vulture -8
Turkey Vulture -4
Red-shouldered Hawk -3
American Kestrel -2
Lesser Black-backed Gull -1
Eastern Screech Owl -13
Great Horned Owl -4
Barred Owl -4

Belted Kingfisher -10
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker -17
Common Raven -16
Horned Lark -25
Brown Creeper -9
Winter Wren -3
Golden-crowned Kinglet -16
Ruby-crowned Kinglet -1
Eastern Bluebird -164
Hermit Thrush -10
American Robin -1034
Gray Catbird -2
American Pipit -30
Cedar Waxwing -174
Orange-crowned Warbler -1
Yellow-rumped Warbler -10
Field Sparrow -5
Savannah Sparrow -2
Swamp Sparrow -2
White-crowned Sparrow -1
Red-winged Blackbird -899
Rusty Blackbird -1
Common Grackle -6678
Brown-headed Cowbird -84
Purple Finch -1
Pine Siskin -6