



2022 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 71st annual Sussex circle Christmas Count was held on Sunday, December 18th. Thank you to the 31 observers who counted in field teams or by feeder watching; some folks did both again this year. Some of the count's "regulars" were unable to participate this year, so it should be no surprise that Covid19 restrictions were part of the rules for the 3rd consecutive year. This also meant we were again unable to have our annual soup potluck. We remain thankful that we could still hold the count and that all zones were covered, and are hopeful that next year we can again gather for a wrap-up.

Temperatures were at or above freezing during the count. The sky was partly to mostly cloudy with winds under 10 MPH. A total of 76 species (slightly above the count circle average of 73 species) was seen, but only 14,784 individual birds were counted, which is the lowest count since 2003.

Select highlights of this year's count:

- Some of the species that were well over their count average included:
 - ✓ Bufflehead – 246 (count record high) vs 24 average
 - ✓ Hooded Merganser – 113 (count record high) vs 37 average
 - ✓ Red-shouldered Hawk – 13 (tied with 2020 for count record high) vs. 3 average
 - ✓ Red-bellied Woodpecker – 51 vs 29 average
 - ✓ Common Raven – 26 (count record high) vs 7 average
 - ✓ Red-winged Blackbird – 1539 vs 260 average
- Mallard numbers (332) were closer to the count circle average (355) than they have been recently, but the count of American Black Ducks (72), the highest since 2014, was still below the count circle average (88) for the 12th consecutive year.
- Cackling Goose was the only count week species reported. It has been seen on 7 count days since 2012; the last time was in 2020.
- A Long-tailed Duck was found on Lake Mohawk. This is only the 3rd time the species has been seen on count day (1973 & 1992 were the other 2 years), though it was a count week bird 9 times between 2003 and 2022. Interesting note: this is one of only a handful of reports of the species on Lake Mohawk (the first was during a bird survey in April 2018). While the lake is one of the largest in the county, it is private and thus difficult to bird due to few public access points.
- A Double-crested Cormorant was seen at White Lake in Sparta. This is only the 8th time in count circle history that the species has been recorded. Interestingly, 7 out of the 8 count circle records were in the 21st century; the only other record was during the 1991 count.
- Bald Eagles continue to be seen in high numbers; this year's total (20) was only 1 less than last year's count circle record high. Fifteen adult and five immature eagles were noted.
- Great Black-backed Gull, an annual count species since 1988, was missed for the 2nd time in the last 6 years (it was a count week bird in 2017).
- There were 3 species of owl counted for the first time since 2014, when we had 4 species. Eight Eastern Screech-Owls were tallied, the most since 2015 (8 were also found in that year).
- For the second consecutive year, only 1 American Kestrel was seen. No Merlins were observed.
- Numbers for all corvids except Common Raven were well below their count averages; Fish Crow (2) was at its lowest number since 2010. Ongoing construction at SCMUA might be one factor..

- There were no warblers reported. This is the 2nd time in the last 3 years in which this has occurred. It's also the 3rd time in the last 5 years in which no Yellow-rumped Warblers were found; that species had been an annual count day bird from 1988 through 2018.
- American Tree Sparrow numbers (23) dropped from last year and so were still well below the count circle average (388) for the species. This is the 21st consecutive year in which the tally was below-average; the count has been below 50 birds for 4 of the last 5 years. Other sparrow numbers were a mixed bag this year. There were no White-crowned Sparrows for the first time since 2015. Song Sparrows were at their lowest count (38) since 2003. Only White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco numbers were above their respective count averages.
- Red-winged Blackbirds were still well above their count average, but Common Grackle numbers were far lower than they have been over the last few years. This may have been due to timing of observations by several field teams, since it seems that no one saw the “typical” night-roosting movements of flocks.
- House Finch and American Goldfinch numbers were below average for the 5th consecutive year. One Purple Finch was seen, but no Pine Siskins were found despite intermittent sightings at feeders in the weeks prior to the count.
- Other species that were well under their count average included:
 - ✓ Snow Goose – 1 vs 563 average
 - ✓ Ring-necked Duck – 16 vs 57 average
 - ✓ Mourning Dove – 137 vs 386 average
 - ✓ Black-capped Chickadee – 157 vs 290 average
 - ✓ Golden-crowned Kinglet – 5 vs 21 average
 - ✓ American Robin – 189 vs 356 average
 - ✓ European Starling – 2747 vs 4242 average
 - ✓ Cedar Waxwing – 13 vs 90 average
 - ✓ Brown-headed Cowbird – 117 vs 308 average
 - ✓ House Finch – 89 vs 265 average
 - ✓ American Goldfinch – 70 (lowest count since 2013) vs 139 average
 - ✓ House Sparrow – 262 vs 872 average

Next year's count will be held on Sunday, December 17th, 2023 (barring ice storms, blizzards, or other acts of God or man), so please mark your calendars. Everyone, including returning players and new participants, particularly feeder watchers, are welcome and encouraged to join us!

Good birding – and good health – to you all in the new year, and thanks again to everyone who participated in this year's count!

Marianne Ofenloch, Sussex CBC Compiler

SUSSEX COUNTY CBC

71st ANNUAL COUNT TOTALS

12/18/2022

Snow Goose	1	Killdeer		Brown Thrasher	
Cackling Goose	CW	Wilson's Snipe		Northern Mockingbird	31
Canada Goose	2980	Ring-billed Gull	1261	European Starling	2747
Mute Swan	75	Herring Gull	120	American Pipit	
Wood Duck		Iceland Gull		Cedar Waxwing	13
Gadwall	3	Lesser Black-backed Gull		Snow Bunting	
American Wigeon		Great Black-backed Gull		Yellow-rumped Warbler	
American Black Duck	72	Rock Pigeon	528	American Tree Sparrow	23
Mallard	332	Mourning Dove	137	Chipping Sparrow	
Northern Pintail		Eastern Screech Owl	8	Field Sparrow	2
Green-winged Teal		Great Horned Owl	2	Fox Sparrow	2
Canvasback		Barred Owl	1	Dark-eyed Junco	887
Ring-necked Duck	16	Northern Saw-whet Owl		White-crowned Sparrow	
Greater Scaup		Belted Kingfisher	8	White-throated Sparrow	229
Lesser Scaup		Red-bellied Woodpecker	51	Song Sparrow	38
Long-tailed Duck	1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	8	Swamp Sparrow	10
Bufflehead	246	Downy Woodpecker	84	Eastern Towhee	
Common Goldeneye	35	Hairy Woodpecker	22	Northern Cardinal	115
Hooded Merganser	113	Northern Flicker	22	Red-winged Blackbird	1539
Common Merganser	309	Pileated Woodpecker	12	Rusty Blackbird	2
Red-breasted Merganser		American Kestrel	1	Common Grackle	320
Ruddy Duck	155	Merlin		Brown-headed Cowbird	117
Ring-necked Pheasant		Eastern Phoebe		House Finch	89
Wild Turkey	90	Blue Jay	158	Purple Finch	1
Common Loon		American Crow	342	Pine Siskin	
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Fish Crow	2	American Goldfinch	70
Horned Grebe		Common Raven	26	House Sparrow	262
DbI-crested Cormorant	1	Horned Lark			
Great Blue Heron	13	Black-capped Chickadee	157	Total Species:	76
Black Vulture	66	Tufted Titmouse	156	Total Individuals	14784
Turkey Vulture	104	Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	Count Week species	1
Northern Harrier	5	White-breasted Nuthatch	104		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	Brown Creeper	5	# of Teams	(Covid)
Cooper's Hawk	5	Winter Wren	4	# of Participants on Teams	27
Northern Goshawk		Carolina Wren	39	# of Feeder Watchers	7
Bald Eagle	20	Golden-crowned Kinglet	5		
Red-shouldered Hawk	13	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Low Temp (F)	25
Red-tailed Hawk	64	Eastern Bluebird	104	High Temp (F)	30
Virginia Rail	1	Hermit Thrush	2	Skies, A.M.	Cloudy
Sora		American Robin	189	Skies, P.M.	P Clidy
American Coot		Gray Catbird		Winds (MPH)	3-10

PARTICIPANTS BY ZONE – SUSSEX CBC 12/18/2022

- Zone 1** Karyn Cichocki
- Zone 2** Fred Weber
Feeder Watcher – Donna Traylor
- Zone 3** Sue Predl, Dave Pasake
- Zone 4** Sharon Wander, Wade Wander
- Zone 5** Sue Predl, Dave Pasake
Feeder Watcher – Loretta Mowat
- Zone 6 & 7** Marje Barrett, Joe Burgiel, Bob Barth, Barb Sendelbach, Mark Sendelbach
Feeder Watcher – Barb Sendelbach
- Zone 8 & 9** Beverly Robertson, William Test, Rich Thomas
- Zone 10 & 11** Alan Boyd
- Zone 12** Tom Halliwell, Roger Johnson, Bradley White
- Zone 13 & 14** Maria Loukeris, Giselle Smisko, Bob McDonnell, Kate Besbris
- Zone 15** Ken Witkowski, Matt Skalla, Christine Sullivan
Feeder Watcher – Matt Skalla
- Zone 16** Ryan Johnson
- Zone 17** Bill Warren
Feeder Watchers – Bill & Connie Warren
- Zone 18** *Feeder Watcher – Lori Krieger*

SUSSEX COUNTY CBC 71st ANNUAL ZONE TOTALS *(high count among zones in red)* 12/18/2022

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6,7	8,9	10,11	12	13,14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
Snow Goose			1												1
Gr Wht-fr Goose															
Cackling Goose															
Canada Goose	239	500	1276	7	72	75	43	268	35	282	120	45	18		2980
Mute Swan	6	8					2	3	5	7			44		75
Wood Duck															
Gadwall										3					3
Am. Wigeon															
Am. Black Duck		60				7		2				3			72
Mallard	6	180	23	2	4	21		16	1	18	6	45	10		332
Grn-wngd Teal															
Northern Pintail															
Ring-neckd Duck	1	14								1					16
Greater Scaup															
Lesser Scaup															
Long-tailed Duck													1		1
Bufflehead		70								1			175		246
Com. Goldeneye		35													35
Hood.Mergansr	4	25						5		2	2		75		113
Com. Mergansr		200						1					108		309

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6,7	8,9	10,11	12	13,14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
Rd-br Merganser															
Ruddy Duck		18											137		155
Ring-nkd Pheasant															
Wild Turkey		24			35		10			7	14				90
Common Loon															
Pied-billed Grebe		1													1
Dbl-cr Cormorant										1					1
Grt Blue Heron	2	1			1			6		1		2			13
Black Vulture		25				6	5	12	8	4	5	1			66
Turkey Vulture	4	3	5	7	13	18	11	10	8	8	12	3	2		104
Northern Harrier				2					1	2					5
Shrp-shnd Hawk			1	1				1				1			4
Cooper's Hawk		1				1		1	1	1					5
Bald Eagle	1	2	1		2	1	2	4	2	3	2				20
Red-shldrd Hawk		1	1			2	2	4	1	1		1			13
Red-tailed Hawk	5	3	7	9	5	2	4	7	5	7	9	1			64
Virginia Rail								1							1
American Coot															
Killdeer															
Wilson's Snipe															
Ring-billed Gull		500			2	1	124	10	200	300		4	120		1261
Herring Gull		2						75	30				13		120
Iceland Gull															
Lssr Blk-bckd Gull															
Grt Blk-bckd Gull															
Rock Pigeon	33	150	6	170		78	54	3	24	10					528
Mourning Dove	4	13	23	2	12	15	31	3	16	1	7	4	6		137
East Screech Owl									7			1			8
Gr Horned Owl								2							2
Barred Owl									1						1
Belted Kingfisher				1			2	3			2				8
Rd-bell. Woodp.	2	7	3	2	2	5	5	4	4	1	5	8	2	1	51
Yel-bel Sapscker		1		1			1	1		1	1	2			8
Downy Wdpker	4	9	7	4	5	6	3	2	9	4	9	16	4	2	84
Hairy Wdpecker	1						1	4	3	1	1	7	2	2	22
Northern Flicker	4		3	6					3	1	1	3	1		22
Pileated Wdpker	1					1	1	1		1	3	2	2		12
Am. Kestrel				1											1
Merlin															
Eastern Phoebe															
Blue Jay	15	6	3	21	18	19	17	12	16	7	8	12	2	2	158
American Crow	20	70	12	38	17	61	49	11	15	17	8	15	7	2	342
Fish Crow	1											1			2
Common Raven	2	6		4	2	2		5	1		3		1		26

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6,7	8,9	10,11	12	13,14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
Blk-cap Chkadee	16	14	1	12	8	10	15	3	26	3	27	18	2	2	157
Tufted Titmouse	15	13	3	12	8	8	13	5	14	3	28	23	4	7	156
Red-br Nuthatch						2			1						3
White-br Nuthatch	8	8	2	2	4	2	14	3	13	2	15	27	3	1	104
Brown Creeper								1		1		3			5
House Wren															
Winter Wren												4			4
Carolina Wren	3	2			1	6	1	3	3	2	1	14	2	1	39
Goldn-cr Kinglet									3			2			5
Ruby-cr Kinglet												1			1
Eastern Bluebird	15		14	4	10	3	6	6	8	6	3	29			104
Hermit Thrush					1							1			2
American Robin	7				11	8	22	2	125	12		2			189
Gray Catbird															
Brown Thrasher															
Nor. Mckingbird	3	1	1	1	8	2	4	2	3	3	1	1	1		31
Euro. Starling	263	800	190	570	219	171	80	250	50	130	8	14	2		2747
American Pipit															
Cedar Waxwing								13							13
Snow Bunting															
Yel-rmpd Warblr															
Am. Tree Sparr	4		1		5			2	3	3	1	3	1		23
Chipping Sparr															
Field Sparrow							2								2
Fox Sparrow						1			1						2
Dark-eyed Junco	138	90	45	28	109	49	111	63	70	58	49	51	24	2	887
Wh-crnl Sparrow															
Wh-thrt Sparr	18	24	4	10	17	19	13	18	30	8	4	60	4		229
Song Sparrow	4	3		1	1	4	2	2	11	2	2	6			38
Swamp Sparrow		2					4	1	3						10
Eastern Towhee															
North. Cardinal	9	9		9	11	10	12	8	16	4	9	14	2	2	115
Red-wngd Blkbird				30	2				1500			6	1		1539
Rusty Blackbird									1		1				2
Comm. Grackle								20	300						320
Brwn-hd Cowbrd		100		2					15						117
House Finch	7	22	6			19	7		6		7	13	2		89
Purple Finch			1												1
Comm. Redpoll															
Amer. Goldfinch	2	13	11	1	1	1	3	2	1	5	11	19			70
House Sparrow	82	15	5	7	9	7	54	30	20	3	8	14	8		262
TOTALS	949	3051	1656	591	991	643	730	911	2619	938	393	502	786	24	14784
Total # Species	36	44	28	31	31	35	36	48	47	44	35	43	33	11	76
Bald eagle ages	1 a	2 a	1 a		1a,1	1 i	2 a	3a,1i	2 a	1a, 2i	2 a				15a, 5i

Suss CBC Species History: # of years seen (out of 71 possible years), high count, & average # seen per year

SPECIES	yrs	high ct	ave	SPECIES	yrs	high ct	ave	SPECIES	yrs	high ct	ave	SPECIES	yrs	high ct	ave
GWF Goose	2	1	1	No Harrier	46	12	3	Gyrfalcon	0	0	0	Chip Sparrow	16	6	1
Sn Goose	26	8110	563	Shrp-shn Hwk	52	16	5	Monk Pkeet	1	1	1	Field Sparr	45	33	5
Brant	3	3	2	Coop Hawk	48	17	6	Nnday Pket	1	1	1	Lark Sparr	2	1	1
Cck Goose	7	2	2	No Goshawk	11	1	1	E Phoebe	13	2	1	Fox Spar	44	51	6
Can Goose	53	8420	2767	Bald Eagle	30	21	6	No Shrike	20	6	2	DE Junco	71	2746	702
Mute Swan	66	236	58	Rd-shld Hawk	29	13	3	Logg Shrike	6	2	1	WC Sparrow	34	69	11
Tund Swan	4	8	3	Rd-tail Hawk	71	138	55	Blue Jay	71	593	245	WT Sparrow	71	893	185
Wood Dck	40	20	4	Rough Hawk	27	7	2	Am Crow	71	1802	538	Vesp Sparr	5	8	3
Gadwall	24	44	14	King Rail	0	0	0	Fish Crow	18	70	19	Savan Sparr	7	4	2
Eur Wign	1	2	2	Virginia Rail	31	6	2	Com Raven	21	26	7	Song Sparr	71	230	77
Am Wign	20	57	9	Sora	3	2	1	Horned Lark	44	991	175	Linc Sparr	1	1	1
Am Bk Dck	70	314	89	Cm Gallinule	2	1	1	Bkcp Chick	71	716	290	Swmp Spar	68	69	14
Mallard	69	888	355	Am Coot	40	228	38	Breal Chick	2	5	4	E Towhee	26	4	1
Blwg Teal	5	6	3	Killdeer	45	21	4	Tuft Ttmse	71	333	133	N Cardinal	70	250	135
N Shovlr	5	2	1	Spot Sndpipr	1	1	1	Rdbr Nthch	48	103	9	BkHd Grsbk	0	0	0
N Pintail	16	6	3	Sol Sndpipr	1	1	1	Whbr Nthch	71	179	74	Dickcissel	2	3	2
Gnwng Teal	23	19	4	Wils Snipe	52	30	7	Brn Creepr	61	21	6	Rdwng Bkbd	67	3006	260
Cnvsbck	20	38	4	Am Woodck	13	2	1	House Wren	1	1	1	E Mdwlark	37	160	43
Redhead	15	18	4	Rng-bill Gull	53	7526	1858	Wntr Wren	41	10	3	Rusty Bkbird	46	372	22
Rngneck	51	285	57	Herring Gull	64	3315	673	Marsh Wren	9	2	1	Brew Blkbrd	1	1	1
Gr Scaup	3	8	4	Iceland Gull	15	3	1	Sedge Wren	1	1	1	Com Grckle	57	15039	865
LsScaup	31	36	5	Kumis Gull	1	1	1	Carol Wren	52	92	23	BH Cowbird	67	2482	309
BkScoter	0	0	0	Ls Bkbk Gull	18	4	2	G-cr Kinglet	64	143	21	Balt Oriole	8	2	1
Lngtl Dck	3	1	1	Glauc Gull	3	2	1	R-cr Kinglet	46	19	4	Pine Grosbk	5	127	35
Buffle	38	246	24	Gr Bkbk Gull	38	316	66	E Bluebird	52	307	90	House Finch	58	1036	265
CmGldneye	52	200	47	Rock Pigeon	40	1101	547	Grchk Thrsh	1	1	1	Purp Finch	63	438	25
Hood Merg	51	164	37	Mourn Dove	70	1145	386	Swns Thrush	1	1	1	Rd Crossbll	4	16	9
Com Merg	59	4193	312	Barn Owl	13	2	1	HermThrush	41	23	6	WW Crssbill	2	1	1
Rdbr Merg	8	3	2	E Scrch Owl	61	20	5	Am Robin	66	5824	356	CmRedpoll	23	443	43
Ruddy	36	430	70	GrHorn Owl	56	36	8	Gray Catbird	25	4	1	Pine Siskin	34	281	30
NBobwhite	5	12	3	Snowy Owl	2	1	1	Br Thrash	6	2	1	Am Gldfinch	71	410	139
Rgnk Pheas	59	61	8	Barred Owl	29	5	2	N Mock	65	159	53	Eve Grosbk	35	485	76
RfGrouse	43	9	3	Lng-ear Owl	20	7	2	Eur Starling	70	23183	4242	House Sparr	71	3028	873
Wild Turkey	35	360	107	Shrt-ear Owl	1	2	2	Am Pipit	7	80	23	Species with zeroes in all columns have only been seen during count week(s).			
Rdthr Loon	2	1	1	N Swwht Owl	3	1	1	Cedar Wax	56	545	91				
Com Loon	14	3	2	Belt Knfshr	69	28	9	McC Lgspr	1	1	1				
Pbill Grebe	40	25	5	Rd-hd Wdpckr	27	9	2	LpInd Lgspr	8	8	2				
Hrn Grebe	12	13	4	Rd-bel Wdpckr	59	104	30	Snow Bunt	12	120	42				
Rdnk Grebe	2	1	1	Ylbel Sapsckr	38	26	6	N Wtrthrush	1	1	1				
DbldrCorm	8	2	1	Downy Wdpckr	71	162	78	Nash Wrblr	1	1	1				
Am Bittern	3	1	1	Hairy Wdpckr	71	35	18	Com Ylwthrt	2	1	1				
G BI Heron	58	30	9	No Flicker	66	74	18	CM Warbler	3	1	1				
Grt Egret	0	0	0	Pil Wdpckr	58	28	7	Pine Wrblr	1	1	1				
Blk Vulture	30	370	76	Am Kestrel	65	67	15	Ylmp Wrblr	44	235	24				
Trk Vulture	36	208	60	Merlin	7	4	2	Yelbr Chat	0	0	0				
Gold Eagle	0	0	0	Peregrine	1	1	1	Am Tr Spar	71	1445	388				