

Waterloo Recreation Area Christmas Bird Count – 2016

As the week before our December 17th count progressed, dire weather predictions made for a very uncertain count day. Amazingly, for the twenty-nine participants that did come out to count on the forty-eighth annual CBC, we enjoyed mild temperatures and mostly dry conditions. Even the hardy souls that got up before daylight and listened for owls had a near perfect morning.

We had sixty-seven bird species recorded on count day (record is seventy-two set in 2001). This is extremely high considering there was very little open water which typically means low waterfowl species. Some of the notable bird species included the second ever recorded eastern phoebe (one was seen on 1980 count), golden eagle (1), red-shouldered hawk (1), northern shrike (1), rough-legged hawk (6), fox sparrow (3), merlin (1), red-headed woodpecker (3), yellow-bellied sapsucker (3), and swamp sparrow (3). We also had a couple of great count week bird species with both short-eared owl and pied-billed grebe sightings.

All seven different kinds of woodpeckers that occur in our area in winter made the list including a record nine pileated woodpeckers. Raptors were also well represented this year with ten different species seen. We did record a new high count with red-tailed hawk tallying seventy this year, bettering the old record of sixty-nine in 1989.

One of the disappointments, continuing a sad trend, was that ruffed grouse and bobwhite quail, two old-time species that we could count on every year. Either species have not been seen in the last few years. We also missed on northern mockingbird, golden-crowned kinglet and yellow-rumped warbler. Winter finches have not made the trek down the state, so no pine siskin or common redpolls. We did find American robins (199) and sandhill cranes (320) in good numbers and picked up single common grackle, gray catbird, and hooded merganser. A couple of other good finds were wood duck (2), brown creeper (3), and Carolina wren (2). A big thanks to all that helped with the count! Save the date for next year's Christmas Bird Count, which will be December 16th. Mark your calendars now and if anyone who is not already on count contact list or riding in someone's car for next year's count and would like to help, please contact Gary Siegrist at gwsiegrist@gmail.com. Finally, I would like to thank Don & Robyn Henise and before them Ron Hoffman for their years of volunteering as compilers for the CBC.

Canada Goose	49	Great Horned Owl	1	Yellow-rumped warbler
Mute Swan	17	Barred Owl		Eastern Towhee
Tundra Swan		Long-eared Owl		American Tree Sparrow
Wood Duck	2	Belted Kingfisher	2	
American Black Duck		Red-headed woodpecker	3	Field Sparrow
Mallard	38	Red-bellied woodpecker	79	Song Sparrow
Ring-necked Duck		Yellow-bellied sapsucker	3	Swamp Sparrow
Bufflehead		Downy woodpecker	58	White-throated Sparrow
Common Goldeneye		Hairy woodpecker	11	Dark-eyed Junco
Hooded Merganser	1	Northern Flicker	21	
Common Merganser		Pileated woodpecker	9	Lapland Longspur
Ring-necked Pheasant	4	Northern Shrike	1	Snow Bunting
Ruffed Grouse		Blue Jay	275	Northern Cardinal
Wild Turkey	103			
Northern Bobwhite		American Crow	148	Red-winged Blackbird
Great Blue Heron	3			Eastern Meadowlark
Bald Eagle	4	Horned Lark	61	Rusty Blackbird
Northern Harrier	2	Black-capped Chickadee	201	Common Grackle
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1			Brown-headed Cowbird
Cooper's Hawk	8	Tufted Titmouse	91	Blackbird species
Northern Goshawk*		Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	Purple Finch
Accipiter species		White-breasted Nuthatch	92	House Finch
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	Brown Creeper	3	
Red-tailed Hawk	70	Carolina Wren	2	Common Redpoll
Rough-legged Hawk	6	Winter Wren		Pine Siskin
American Kestrel	12	Golden-crowned Kinglet		American Goldfinch
American Coot		Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	
Sandhill Crane	320	Eastern Bluebird	27	Evening Grosbeak
Wilson's Snipe		Hermit Thrush	4	House Sparrow
Ring-billed Gull		American Robin	199	
Herring Gull				
Gull species		Gray Catbird	1	
Rock Pigeon	191	Northern Mockingbird		
Mourning Dove	487	European Starling	430	
Eastern Screech-Owl	7	Cedar waxwing	80	

Species not on list:

Chipping sparrow - 3
Merlin - 1
Fox sparrow - 3
Golden eagle - 1
Eastern phoebe - 1
Scoter species - 1

Species count week:

Short-eared owl- 1
Pied-billed grebe - 1