

# Bird Bash Report

## November 2020

*By Dick Tafel, Compiler*

Positively beautiful weather and a surprising number of birds for last weekend's November Bird Bash! Twenty-five (25) participants discovered 74 species of birds – far more than last year's 52, and even rather greater than the average of 68 over the past 18 Bird Bash years.

So, as usual, starting out with birds not noted during the previous ten months, and in rough taxonomic order (the same order as within our Seasonal Checklist of North Bay and Area), we begin with two, always late-coming scoters, the Surf noted in Callander Bay and the Black seen in Verner Lagoon, as well as several Long-tailed Ducks seen on Lake Nipissing from Sunset Park and on Callander Bay, all by Renee Levesque and yours truly, with Long-tails also spotted by Grant and Shirley McKercher.

A Red-breasted Merganser was seen by Keith Thornborrow near South River.

The not-very-often-seen Spruce Grouse was discovered by the Levesque pair and by Keith.

Five, often late-arriving, White-rumped Sandpipers and a couple of Dunlins were watched by the Levesque duo at Verner Lagoon.

A somewhat early Northern Shrike was spotted by Keith near South River.

Beautiful Bohemian Waxwings were found by Chris Sukha near Field.

Common Redpolls had arrived in huge flocks, not appearing at all last winter. Some 60 or more surprised the Levesque pair at Verner Lagoon. Redpolls were also seen by Chris, Gary and Connie Sturge, the McKerchers, Sarah Wheelan, Buddy Myles, Therez Violette, and Corinne Urrutia, a life bird for her!

Now to birds seen during earlier Bird Bashes, in a similar order, we start with the Common Loon, still around, spotted by Keith, the McKerchers, Gary and Luanne Chowns, Lloyd and Janet Sparks, Chris and the Levesque duo. The latter pair also saw two Horned Grebes at Sunset Park.

A Great Blue Heron was noted only by the Sturges.

Canada Geese were still around in plentiful numbers.

Very majestically, some 100 Tundra Swans were located at the edge of Lake Nipissing near Sturgeon Falls by the Levesque pair and by Therez.

Turkey Vultures seemed to be no longer about.

Some “puddle ducks” were still here, mostly in the lagoons – a Wood Duck, Green-winged Teals and one Northern Pintail spotted by the Levesque pair, who also saw Black Ducks, as did Cindy Lafleur and the Sturges. There were also lots of Mallards spotted by many.

As to divers, both Hooded and Common Mergansers were found by Keith, Chris and the Levesque pair. Commons were spotted by the McKerchers and Greg Jaski, and Hoodeds by the Sparks, Cindy, and Lori Anderson with Ken Gowing. Buffleheads and Common Goldeneyes were seen by many, along with Lesser Scaup. Ring-necked Ducks were noted only by the Anderson and Levesque pairs.

As to predators, only a few were noted - the Red-tailed Hawk by the Sturges, who also saw Bald Eagles, as did Chris and the Levesque and Anderson pairs. The latter two groups also saw Northern Harrier.

Ruffed Grouse were noted by many, but Wild Turkeys were spotted only by Keith and the Sturges.

Both Black-bellied and Golden Plovers were caught sight of at Verner Lagoon by the Levesque pair, as were Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. A Spotted Sandpiper was noted by Chris in Cache Bay.

As to gulls, both Ring-billed and Herring were around in very large numbers, but no other gulls were observed.

Rock Pigeons were certainly still among the most common birds, seen almost everywhere. The Mourning Doves, though fewer in number, were still noted by many participants.

A Barred Owl caught the attention of the Chowns near Restoule.

The McKerchers were the only ones to spot the Belted Kingfisher.

Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were very commonly around, but the Pileated was noted only by Corinne, the Sturges, Chris, Keith, Greg, the McKerchers and the Anderson pair.

No flickers or flycatchers any more for this year!

The Canada Jay was finally spotted again – the first one since March - by Keith and by Chris.

Blue Jays, American Crows and Common Ravens remain quite widely distributed, though clearly there were fewer Blue Jays than during the summer.

Horned Larks were discovered by the Anderson pair, east of Powassan, first ones since January’s Bird Bash!

Of course, Black-capped Chickadees, along with both Red-breasted and to a slightly lesser extent

White-breasted Nuthatches, were about at many places, but the Brown Creeper was discovered only by Keith.

Golden-crowned Kinglets were observed by Chris and Greg.

And the wonderful American Robin was still around, though in few places, and noted by the Levesque duo, Corinne, Sarah, and the Sturges.

Still lots of European Starlings – usually in large flocks.

No warblers at all, not even Yellow-rumps!

As to sparrows, American Tree were spotted by John Levesque, the Sturges, Keith, Chris, Peter and Pam Handley and the Anderson pair; Song was spotted only by the Levesque duo; White-throated was discovered only by the Chowns, who also found White-crowns as did Chris, the Sturges, Keith, and the Levesque pair; and Dark-eyed Juncos were noted by the Chowns, John, Renee, Therez, the Handleys and Keith.

Keith also saw Snow Buntings, as did the Levesque duo, the Sturges and Chris.

Northern Cardinals have put in an appearance, first since February. They were spotted by Corinne, another first for her, at Sweetman's Gardens, and by the Chowns who had 3 at their feeder!

A few Red-winged Blackbirds were still around noted by Therez in Sturgeon Falls. Rusty Blackbirds were spotted by the Levesque duo on Veuve River Road. Common Grackles were seen only by the Anderson duo and Therez.

Pine Grosbeaks were discovered, first since February, by the McKerchers, Chris, Greg, and the Anderson and Levesque pairs.

Chris found both Red and White-winged Crossbills in the Field area, the first since March.

Pine Siskins were recognized by the Handleys, Elsa Tafel, Sarah, Chris, Greg, the Sparks and Buddy. He also noted some American Goldfinch, as did Greg, the Sturges, the Chowns, and the Mckerchers.

Evening Grosbeaks were on the lists of John, the Sparks, Chris, Sarah, the McKerchers, the Chowns, the Handleys, Monica Schwalbe and the Sturges.

Finally the sort of lonely, always last one on our report, House Sparrows were noted by the Sturges, the Anderson duo and by Chris.

And so that concludes our November report! Congratulations to all participants. You did an excellent job!

Note that December's Bird Bash will be over the weekend of **December 5 and 6**. Prepare for it!