

Bird Bash Report, December 2019

By Dick Tafel, Compiler

Thirty-six bird species were reported by 24 participants during our recent Bird Bash over December 7-8. This is the lowest number in December ever! The average during that period since the bashes began in 2003 has been 48. Nevertheless, many very interesting birds were spotted!

Two species observed were the first of the year: a Northern Goshawk was watched by Lori Anderson and Ken Gowing east of Powassan; and several Glaucous Gulls were at the North Bay landfill site enjoyed by Renee Levesque and yours truly.

Next in line in rough taxonomic order one must start with a lonely Common Loon, noted by the Levesque duo in the midst of the still open waters of central Trout Lake.

That follows with two “puddle ducks”, the American Black Duck noted by Keith Thornborrow, and both it and Mallards found by Grant and Shirley McKercher with Keith Pearson, and by the Levesque duo. Mallards were also noted by Gary and Luanne Chowns.

Four “diving ducks” were watched by the Levesque duo in Trout Lake: Hooded and Common Mergansers, Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye. The mergansers were particularly plentiful, with one flock of about 25 Common Mergansers in a long line.

As to other predators, a Rough-legged Hawk was watched by the Levesque duo in Calvin Township. They also saw Bald Eagles, as did the McKercher trio, Keith, Mary Young, Gary and Connie Sturge and the Anderson pair.

Ruffed Grouse were noted by the Sturges, the Levesque pair, Ernie Frayle and Donna Demarco. Wild Turkeys were discovered by Keith.

Three Herring Gulls flying near Callander were seen by the McKercher trio, and noted in fairly large numbers (about 75 still around) by the Levesque duo at the landfill site. They also saw a few Great Black-backed Gulls there. No Ring-billed Gulls were apparently still about.

Rock Pigeons were very abundant, with Mourning Doves much less so, but noted by the Chowns, Mary, the Sturges, Ernie, Keith and Donna.

Downy and Hairy woodpeckers seemed to be at almost every feeder, but Pileateds were

less common, seen, however, by several, including Corinne Urrutia, Mary Ann Kenrick, the Chowns, and the Anderson and Levesque duos.

A Northern Shrike was spotted by the Anderson duo and by the Sturges.

Blue Jays seemed to be ubiquitous, as did Common Ravens and American Crows.

Black-capped Chickadees were everywhere, with Red-breasted Nuthatches being almost as much so. The White-breasted Nuthatch was less common, noted, however, by a few, including Corinne, the McKercher trio and Mary.

European Starlings were still about in large flocks.

As to sparrows, American Trees were spotted by John Levesque, Renee, Ernie, Keith and Mary.

Dark-eyed Juncos were enjoyed by John, Renee, Ernie, Keith, Peter and Pam Handley and yours truly. Snow Buntings were noted only by the Anderson duo.

Common Grackles were spotted only by Ernie.

Purple Finches were observed solely by the Handleys.

Pine Siskins were seen by Lloyd and Janet Sparks and the Sturges.

American Goldfinch have started to become a major feeder bird of this winter, being noted by many, including Elsa Tafel, Buddy Myles, Mary, Mary Ann, the Sparks, the Sturges, the Handleys, the Levesque duo and the Chowns.

Finally, the Anderson pair and the Sturges had House Sparrows nearby.

And so, that is it! It might be a sparse winter upcoming, but that does not mean you shouldn't stay alert and be ready for our **January Bird Bash over the weekend of the 18th and 19th.**

Good going all. Keep looking for and after our wonderful birds and have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.