

# Bird Bash Report

## April 2023

*By Dick Tafel, Compiler*

Such unpleasant weather to be outside looking for birds! Nevertheless, some 26 participants managed to recognize that the birds did not seem to mind the weather and got out to discover 94 bird species within our 50 mile (80.5 km) circle! That was slightly greater than the past 3 years, but below the average of 96 during the 20 years that we have conducted these surveys!

And so let's get at it, starting with new species for the year, following that usual order of the *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*. Which means our wonderfully iconic Common Loon comes to the fore. It was recognized by Steve Pitt at Talon Lake and elsewhere in open waters by Kevin and June Telford, Bill and Carol Fleming, Denise Desmarais, Grant and Shirley McKercher, Garry Waldram, Faye Oei, Chris Sukha, Lloyd and Janet Sparks, and Renee Levesque with your reporter.

Then there were three Horned Grebes discovered by the McKerchers in Callander Bay, and a Red-necked Grebe found by Chris.

Double-crested Cormorants had arrived and were spotted by Greg Jaski, Therez Violette, the Levesque pair, the Sparks, Garry, Chris, the McKerchers, and Denise.

An American Bittern much excited the Telfords!

Then we get to the ducks. We will start with the non-diving ones, beginning with the beautiful Wood Ducks. They were enjoyed by young Jeremie Corbeil, Denise, the McKerchers, Chris, Garry, the Telfords, the Flemings, Steve, and the Levesque duo. The latter pair also saw American Wigeon, Gadwall, and Northern Shovelers, as did Chris, the McKerchers, and Denise. Blue-winged Teal were discovered by the McKerchers, who also saw Green-winged Teal, as did Denise, the Telfords, Garry, and Chris. Faye also saw the Shovelers.

Now as to the diving ducks, we start with Redheads, spotted by the Levesque pair and the McKerchers in Callander Lagoon. Ring-necked Ducks and Lesser Scaup were watched in large numbers by the Levesque pair, Denise, and Chris, while Garry saw the Ring-necked, and the Telfords identified Lesser Scaup. Greg saw Ring-necks.

Now to predators, we get first to the many already nesting Osprey, noted by the McKerchers, the Levesque duo, the Flemings, Denise, Greg, Chris, Garry, and Therez. Broad-winged Hawks had also arrived and were seen by Garry, while April McCrum watched a pair of them.

An American Coot was discovered by the Levesque pair at Cache Bay.

A few shorebirds were found. Killdeer were spotted by Chris, Garry, and the Telfords, who also watched Greater Yellowlegs, as did the Flemings, the Levesque duo, Chris, the McKerchers, and Garry. The Telfords also came upon a Wilson's Snipe, as did Jeremie, and Jeremie also identified an American Woodcock, as did Greg.

The delightful Caspian Terns had arrived and were spotted by Greg, the Levesque duo, and the McKerchers,

No owls were discovered.

The Belted Kingfisher was fairly widely dispersed and recognized by Lori Anderson with Ken Gowing, Denise, Steve, the Sparks, the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, Chris, Garry, and Greg.

The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was found by just a few - Brittany Tartaglia, Mary Young, Greg, the Telfords, the Flemings, the Anderson pair, and Chris. Northern Flickers were quite a bit more numerous, spotted by John Levesque, Marc Buchanan, Denise, Therez, Chris, the Sparks, the Levesque duo, the McKerchers, Garry, Mary, the Anderson duo, the Telfords, Jeremie, and Greg.

Now flycatchers are usually pretty late arriving, for obvious reasons, but somehow Eastern Phoebes know how to manage early on and were discovered by Greg, the McKerchers, the Sparks, the Telfords, Garry, Mary, the Anderson pair, Steve, Chris, and Denise.

Wonderful Tree Swallows galvanized observers as they swooped wildly amidst their peers over a few nearby ponds and Powassan Lagoon, and enjoyed by Denise, the Sparks, Greg, and along with accompanying Barn Swallows, the Levesque and Anderson duos, as well as the Telfords.

Little Winter Wrens have an amazing song recognized by Greg, April, Chris, and Denise.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets have clearly arrived and were observed by Chris, April, the McKerchers, the Levesque duo, the Telfords, and Greg.

Finally, we get to the forest-dwelling birds starting with the Hermit Thrush. Despite the uncomfortable, rainy weather, it was discovered by the Telfords and Faye.

Then we get to the warblers. Were any around yet? Well, the Yellow-rumped had arrived in few numbers and were much enjoyed by the Levesque duo, Denise, Chris, the McKerchers (who identified them by song, as did Faye), and the Telfords. Then there was the very pretty Pine Warbler, one of the few warblers to like seeds. It was clearly identified by Elsa Tafel and yours truly at their feeders, by John at his feeder, and by April. Then there was an Ovenbird somehow found by Chris.

Now we get to the newly-arrived sparrows: The Chipping was located by Chris, the Sparks, Faye, Renee, Mary, and the Telfords. Savannahs were spotted by Denise at Verner Lagoon, by Mary, and by the Anderson pair. Fox Sparrows were on their way further north, but stopped here awhile and were located by John and Renee. Swamp Sparrows were identified by Denise and the Telfords. White-throats had become a bit more common and were noted by Denise, Therez, the Levesque duo, John, Faye, the McKerchers (by song), Jeremie, Mary, Brittany, Marc, Steve, the Flemings, and Chris, who was the only one also to find a White-crowned.

The just-arrived Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were discovered by Steve and Faye.

The Eastern Meadowlark put in a quick appearance for Renee, and was also spotted by Chris and by the Anderson pair who saw many east of Powassan.

Some 50 Rusty Blackbirds put in quite an assemblage for the Levesque duo near the Sturgeon Falls museum. Some were also spotted by the McKerchers, Denise, and John.

Brown-headed Cowbirds were identified by the Levesque and the Anderson combos, as well as by Chris.

A bit surprisingly, Purple Finches put in their first appearance on this year Bird Bash and were noted by Donna Demarco, Chris, John, Faye, the McKerchers, the Flemings, Therez, Garry, Mary, the Levesque duo, the Telfords, Elsa, the Anderson pair, and Denise.

And so that ends the compilation for those wonderful birds appearing on our Bird Bash for the first time this year. We must now get to birds seen previously during this year's Bash, following the same order. This starts with the Great Blue Heron. That grand bird was spotted by the Levesque duo, Garry, Greg, Steve, and Faye.

Then there were Turkey Vultures, seen in greater numbers this month by Faye, the McKerchers, Steve, the Flemings, April, the Anderson duo, the Sparks, Greg, Garry, the Levesque pair, the Telfords, and Mary.

Canada Geese were now spotted by almost everyone! But majestic Trumpeter Swans were upon the lists only of the Levesque duo and the McKerchers.

Ducks seen upon previous counts consisted of the American Black Ducks, recognized by the Levesque duo, Chris, and the McKerchers, and Mallards were spotted by almost everyone. As well, the Canvasback was again discovered, this time by the McKerchers within Callander Lagoon. Greater Scaup were recognized by the Levesque duo, by Garry, and by the Telfords. Bufflehead were now much more common and noted by the Anderson pair, the Telfords, Garry, Chris, Denise, the Flemings, the Levesque pair, Faye, the Anderson duo, Chris, and the McKerchers. Common Goldeneye and Common Mergansers were now around and spotted by Chris, Garry, the Telfords, the Levesque pair, and the McKerchers, while Common Mergansers alone were noted by Greg, Denise, and the Flemings. Garry was the only one to find the Hooded Merganser.

Now as to predators previously noted, we start with the Northern Harrier, watched by Garry, the McKerchers, Jeremie, and the Anderson pair. The Rough-legged Hawk was caught sight of only by the Levesque duo. They also noted the Bald Eagle, as did the McKerchers, Garry, Greg, the Flemings, Chris, and the Telfords, all of whom also saw the American Kestrel, as did Denise, and Chris. The Anderson pair spotted the American Kestrel, while the Merlin was recognized by Chris, the McKerchers, Denise, and Faye, the latter also noting the Bald Eagle, as did Steve.

Ruffed Grouse were found by the Sparks, Garry, Steve, Denise, the McKerchers, Chris, the Anderson pair, Garry, the Telfords, and the Flemings. The latter four groups also found Wild Turkeys.

Sandhill Cranes were discovered by Greg, Denise, Steve, Garry, and the Telfords.

Ring-billed and/or Herring Gulls were watched by most participants, as were Rock Pigeons. Mourning Doves were spotted only by the Telfords, Garry, Steve, Denise, the McKerchers, Chris, the Anderson pair, Greg, Mary, the Sparks, the Levesque duo, and the Flemings.

The Red-bellied Woodpecker was watched only by Mary, still at her feeder. The Downy and Hairy were seen by most participants, generally at their feeders. The Pileated was noted by the Sparks, the Levesque duo, April, John, the Anderson pair, Chris, Steve, and Garry.

Blue Jays were somewhat more numerous than previously and were spotted by Garry, Steve, the McKerchers, the Anderson duo, Donna, Mary, John, Renee, Jeremie, the Sparks, and the Flemings.

American Crows and Common Ravens were noted by most participants, as were the busy Black-capped Chickadees.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were widely spread, but were noted presumably most often at feeders only by Steve, Faye, Denise, John, Renee, and Elsa. The White-breasted were somewhat more numerous, it seems, and noted by Marc, Elsa, Greg, Chris, the McKerchers, Faye, Steve, the Telfords, and the Flemings.

The Brown Creeper was luckily spotted only by Angela Mills from a fortunately timed look from inside her home.

The Golden-crowned Kinglet was located solely by Faye, a lifer for her!

American Robins were now apparent all over the place and enjoyed by most observers.

The Brown Thrasher was still at Mary's, but also discovered by Greg, Garry, the Flemings, and the McKerchers.

European Starlings were everywhere.

American Tree Sparrows were more common than usual and were spotted by the Flemings, the Telfords, Garry, Steve, Denise, the McKerchers, Chris, the Anderson pair, Mary, John, Brittany, the Levesque duo, and Elsa. Song Sparrows were now about and noted by the Levesque duo, Marc, John, Mary, Chris, the McKerchers, Denise, Elsa, Faye, and the Telfords. Dark-eyed Juncos had really arrived, and large numbers were noted by the Flemings, Telfords, Garry, Steve, Faye, Denise, the McKerchers, Chris, Donna, the Anderson duo, Mary, Elsa, John, Jeremie, Marc, the Sparks, Therez, and the Levesque duo.

Red-winged Blackbirds had become common at marshy areas as well as at feeders, and were noted by most participants. Common Grackles were also now very widely dispersed.

Common Redpolls had pretty well disappeared, but some were still noted by the McKerchers.

Some Pine Siskins were still about – at Elsa's and the Levesque feeders and located also by Chris and the McKerchers.

American Goldfinches had arrived in pretty wide numbers and were discovered by Elsa, the McKerchers, Therez, Denise, Garry, and the Levesque duo.

Evening Grosbeaks have continued around here longer than might have been expected and were seen by John and Renee, the Flemings, Garry, Steve, Faye, Therez, Brittany (some 25 birds), Mary, the Anderson pair, and Chris.

Finally we have the often maligned House Sparrows, spotted by the McKerchers, Chris, the Anderson duo, and the Levesque pair.

And so that was a pretty effective bunch of searches by the 26 participants despite rather unpleasant weather during 3/4 of this month's Bird Bash. Congrats to all!

Expect the May Bird Bash to be even more impressive, happening as it will over the last weekend, namely **May27-28**. Prepare for it! There should be lots of warblers and flycatchers and thrushes to add to the list.