

Bird Bash Report

January 2024

By Dick Tafel, Compiler

That weather – wow, it was cold - but still some 23 participants did not seem to mind very much. The 36 species of birds discovered did not show many obvious concerns either, for it was about an average number of species noted during the past 21 years of following through with such efforts. However, some might mention that last year we identified 42!

But let's get to the dynamics of the searches, all birds being new for the year, and following the order set out in the *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*.

The few ducks around included the American Black Duck spotted by Grant and Shirley McKercher, by the duo of Renee Levesque and yours truly, and by Garry Waldrum. The latter two groups also found Mallards, as did Mary Young, Diane and Alvin Deagle, and Greg Jaski. Both Garry and the McKerchers also spotted Common Goldeneyes, Garry in Bonfield and the McKerchers on the Ottawa River in Mattawa.

A few predators were about, including the Red-tailed Hawk found by June and Kevin Telford at the East Ferris landfill site, along with Bald Eagles. Bald Eagles were also seen by Sue Gratton, Faye Oei, Steve Pitt, Linda Stoner, the Levesque duo, Garry, and the McKerchers.

Ruffed Grouse were watched by Lori Anderson with Ken Gowing, Garry, Steve, the Telfords, and Mary. Lloyd and Janet Sparks and the Anderson duo were the only ones to find Wild Turkeys.

Rock Doves were, as usual, spotted by almost everyone, while Mourning Doves were noted only by Faye, Sue, and Mary who had ten at her feeders.

A Great Horned Owl was heard by Renee near her home, while a Northern Hawk Owl was spotted by the McKerchers in the Lake Nosbonsing area.

The local woodpecker clans were seen by many - the Downy and the Hairy by John Levesque, Steve, the Telfords, the Deagles, Mary, and Faye, while the Hairy

alone was spotted by Elsa Tafel, Garry, Sue, the Anderson duo, Linda, the Sparks, and the McKerchers. The always exciting Pileated was on the lists of the Telfords, Renee, John, yours truly, Mary, the Deagles, and the Anderson pair.

An enigmatic Northern Shrike, often present during the colder times in our parts, was discovered by Steve and by the Levesque duo.

Blue Jays seemed to be just about everywhere, but no Canada Jays were located.

Some American Crows have stayed around and were identified by April McCrum, Brittany Tartaglia, the McKerchers, Steve, the Deagles, the Anderson pair, Mary, the Levesque pair, the Telfords, the Sparks, and Greg. Most participants saw the more widely dispersed Common Raven.

The always delightful Black-capped Chickadee was on virtually everyone's list. But the Red-breasted Nuthatch was located only by Mary, John, Sue, Garry, and Steve, who also spotted the White-breasted Nuthatch, as did the Anderson pair, Mary, Faye, Elsa, and the Telfords.

Rather amazingly, an American Robin was caught sight of by Mary near the base of Laurentian Ski Hill.

European Starlings were about, usually in large flocks, and seen by many.

And a marvelous flock of about 250 Bohemian Waxwings was watched by April and by the Deagles.

A few American Tree Sparrows have stayed around and were seen by Mary, Sue, John, and Renee. Also still around were a few Dark-eyed Juncos seen by Garry, Brittany, and Steve.

Snow Buntings were watched only by Garry, the Anderson pair, Steve, and the Levesque duo.

A delightful Northern Cardinal was heard by Brittany.

Pine Grosbeaks were spotted by the Levesque duo, Steve, the Anderson pair, Garry, and Mary.

Purple Finches were on the lists of Mary, Sue, the McKerchers, Steve, the Sparks,

the Telfords, John, Renee, and Faye.

Red Crossbills were fairly evident this year and were discovered by the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, the Anderson duo, and Garry.

Common Redpolls were noted by Garry, Sue, the Anderson duo, the McKerchers, the Levesque pair, the Deagles, Brittany, Faye, and Mary.

Pine Siskins seemed particularly present in large flocks and were watched by Mary, Garry, John, Renee, the Telfords, the Sparks, Steve, Greg, Elsa, yours truly, and the Anderson duo.

American Goldfinches were staying around and were spotted by Garry, Mary, the Deagles, the McKerchers, Steve, yours truly, and Brittany.

Evening Grosbeaks were also around and spotted by Faye, the Levesque duo, Steve, the McKerchers, Sue, Mary, and Garry.

Which brings us to the always last on our list, the sometimes unpopular House Sparrow, noted only by the Anderson duo.

All in all a very respectable winter list, especially considering the very cold weather! Congratulations to all participants!

And be thinking about your upcoming **February Bird Bash which should be over the weekend of February 17**, the same general time as the Great Backyard Bird Count!