

Bird Bash Report

February 2024

By Dick Tafel, compiler

Well, the February count is over and somehow 21 participants managed to discover some 38 species of birds within 50 miles or 80.5 km of North Bay! That is slightly more than the average for us over 21 years of consecutive counting - and more than the 34 we discovered last year. Looking over past records, it seems, however, that for the 4 years from 2011 to 2014 we managed to average 41. So, February can be quite an interesting month bird-wise!

But let's get going, starting with those species not seen in January. Using the order in our booklet, the *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*, we begin with the Common Merganser found by Garry Waldram in Bonfield.

We start with a Cooper's Hawk viewed by Lloyd and Janet Sparks close to their home. After that we have a Barred Owl heard clearly by Denise Desmarais under the full moon.

The elusive Canada Jay was found by Lori Anderson with Ken Gowing, Greg Jaski, and Keith Thornborrow.

Horned Larks were spotted only by Denise!

The White-winged Crossbill was unearthed this month solely by Garry!

Which brings us to those birds previously seen this Bird Bash year. The first ones upon the list, seen at the Green Store area of Trout Lake, were American Black Ducks and Mallards, both spotted by Renee Levesque and yours truly, with Blacks noted by Garry and Mallards noted by June and Kevin Telford, young Jeremie Corbeil, and Greg.

Garry also spotted Common Goldeneye in Bonfield and the Levesque duo spotted them in Restoule.

Bald Eagles were discovered by John Levesque, the duo of Linda Stoner and Pat Stack, Garry, the Levesque pair, the Telfords, Jeremie, and the Anderson duo.

Ruffed Grouse were on the lists of Faye Oei, Donna Demarco, Steve Pitt, the Anderson pair, the Telfords, Garry, the Levesque duo, Keith, and Denise. No Wild Turkeys this month?

Rock Doves continue to be almost universal, while the Mourning Dove was seen only by the Telfords, Jeremie, the Anderson duo, the Stoner duo, Keith, and Greg.

A Great Horned Owl was heard well by Denise, again under the lovely full moon. The infamous Northern Hawk Owl (near Lake Nosbonsing) was spotted by Garry.

Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were watched by Elsa Tafel, Keith, the Anderson duo, the Stoner duo, Steve, Donna, and Garry, while Downys alone were noted by John, Renee, and the Telfords, and Hairys by the Sparks, Denise, and Faye. The great Pileated was seen by the Levesque pair, the Sparks, Keith, and Greg.

Northern Shrikes were discovered by Steve, the Telfords, and the Levesque pair.

Now as to Blue Jays, they seemed to be all over the place and were spotted by almost everyone except for Jeremie and Greg. American Crows were less spied, seen only by Greg, the Sparks, the Levesque duo, the Stoner duo, the Telfords, Steve, the Anderson pair, Keith, and Faye. Very widespread Common Ravens were observed by Faye, Denise, Keith, the Anderson duo, Steve, Garry, Donna, the Telfords, the Levesque duo, the Sparks, Greg, and Jeremie.

Who did not enjoy the black-capped Chickadees? - none!

Red-breasted Nuthatches, on the other hand, were noticed only by Denise, Keith, the Anderson pair, Steve, Garry, the Telfords, and the Sparks; with the White-breasted appearing on the lists of the Sparks, the Levesque pair, the Telfords, Steve, and the Anderson duo.

European Starlings seemed to have lessened in number, but were seen by most.

Bohemian Waxwings were found only by Garry and the Stoner duo.

American Tree Sparrows made it to the attention of the Levesque pair, Keith, Garry, and John.

Dark-eyed Juncos kept out of the way of all but Steve, Garry, Donna, and the Telfords.

Snow Buntings were watched by Garry, Steve, the Stoner duo, and Denise.

Pretty Pine Grosbeaks were observed only by the Levesque duo!

Purple Finches were on the lists of the Sparks, the Telfords, Garry, the Anderson pair, and Faye.

Red Crossbills were spotted only by Denise, Garry, and Greg.

Common Redpolls were fairly common, being identified by Elsa, the Levesque pair, Faye, the Telfords, the Stoner pair, Garry, Denise, and the Anderson duo.

Pine Siskins were also very widespread, being noted by the Anderson duo, John, Garry, the Sparks, the Telfords, Donna, Faye, Keith, Steve, the Levesque pair, Elsa, and Greg.

American Goldfinches were on the lists of Elsa, the Levesque duo, the Telfords, Garry, Denise, the Anderson pair, and Steve.

The once more common Evening Grosbeaks were spotted by Steve, Keith, Garry, the Telfords, Donna, the Stoner pair, and Faye.

Finally, the more indoor- seeking (barns, etc.) House Sparrows were found by the Anderson and the Levesque pairs.

Which gets us to the end of the lists! Congratulations to all who kept going despite less than perfect conditions, and found so many interesting and sometimes very furtive birds!

The March Bird Bash should be much more fulsome! Plan for it over the weekend of **March 23-24 (not the Easter weekend)**.