

Bird Bash Report

December 2024

By Dick Tafel, compiler

This past weekend, twenty-two stalwarts overcame some crummy weather to discern 44 species of birds within our Bird Bash range of a 50 mile or 80.5 km radius of North Bay. That number surpassed just five other “bashes” during its 22 year existence. But the birds observed were certainly interesting, even if not plentiful – as we shall see!

We always begin with birds not seen during the previous months of activity, following the order set out in our *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*. And that starts with the Long-tailed Duck spotted by Garry Waldram and by Lori Anderson with Ken Gowing.

Then there was the Iceland Gull and Glaucous Gull both seen by Renee Levesque along with yours truly at North Bay’s Merrick Landfill Site among hundreds of other gulls. The Iceland was also identified by the Anderson pair on Trout Lake.

Then there was a Red-bellied Woodpecker watched by Mary Young, a woodpecker that seems to be slowly moving north into our area.

Now, back to the other birds already seen this Bird Bash year, following the same order and beginning with a Common Loon caught sight of by Grant and Shirley McKercher in Lake Nipissing.

A Red-necked Grebe was noted by yours truly on Talon Lake.

Just a few Canada Geese were still about and noted only by Faye Oei, Garry, and the Anderson pair.

The only “puddle ducks” were the fairly numerous Mallards seen by many and the American Black Duck noticed by Garry.

In terms of diving ducks, a Bufflehead was spotted in Trout Lake by the Levesque and Anderson pairs and by Mary; Common Goldeneyes were spotted by Chris Sukha, yours truly, the McKerchers, Garry, and the Anderson duo; and Common Mergansers were discovered by Elsa Tafel, Chris, and the McKerchers, while the Hooded Merganser displayed its beauty only to Garry.

The imperious Bald Eagle was discovered by Lloyd and Janet Sparks, Linda Stoner, Chris, the McKerchers, and the Levesque pair.

Ruffed Grouse were on the lists of Steve Pitt, Donna Demarco, and Mary. Wild Turkeys were spotted by Keith Thornborrow, Bill and Carol Fleming, the Anderson duo, and Faye.

Herring Gulls and some Ring-billed Gulls were still very numerous but discerned only by Mary and the Levesque pair, with the Herring alone identified by Faye. The Great Black-backed was found by the Levesque pair.

Rock Pigeons remained one of our most frequently seen birds, spotted by most observers. Mourning Doves were seen by several, including Faye, the McKerchers, the Flemings, Keith, and Mary who had some 29 of them at her place.

A Barred Owl was on the list of April McCrum and the Sparks.

The Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were on most lists, but the Pileated was noted only by Butterfly Fields, Elsa, Keith, the Flemings, Chris, Linda, the Anderson pair, and Mary.

A Northern Shrike was viewed by Chris and the Anderson pair.

Canada Jays were found once again only by Keith, but Blue Jays remained very abundant, as did American Crows and Common Ravens, all seen by many.

The ubiquitous Black-capped Chickadee was on all lists.

The Red-breasted Nuthatch was spotted by John Levesque, Renee, and Faye, while the White-breasted was noted by Mary, Faye, yours truly, Elsa, the McKerchers, and the Flemings. Keith, Linda, Garry, and Steve spotted both.

No robins made it to a list, but European Starlings did, observed, usually in fair numbers, by the McKerchers, Donna, the Anderson duo, Garry, Linda, Butterfly, and the Levesque pair.

American Tree Sparrows were identified by the McKerchers, the Levesque pair, Keith, John, Mary, the Anderson duo, and Faye. The White-throated Sparrow also came to the attention of the McKerchers.

A flock of Snow Buntings was enjoyed by the Levesque pair at the landfill site.

The “some are still around” Red-winged Blackbird was discovered by Donna and the Common Grackle discovered by Mary at her feeder.

A Pine Grosbeak came to the feeders of John and Renee.

The Pine Siskin was identified by Faye.

American Goldfinch were fairly abundant (about 25) at some feeders, such as that of the Tafels, and were also noted by the McKerchers, Steve, Linda, and Keith.

The striking Evening Grosbeak was brought to the attention of Keith and Donna.

And finally the House Sparrow was once again upon the Anderson list.

Thus concludes the final Bird Bash for 2024! Congrats to all participants. Despite an obvious diminution of birds for the last month, a good list was certainly obtained!

There will be a bit of a wait for the first “bash” for 2025, but mark down the dates of **January 18-19** to start a new Bird Bash year!

And Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!