

76th Bronx/Westchester Christmas Bird Count

December 26, 1999

Eighty-two participants recorded 120 species and 56,325 birds in the 76th Bronx-Westchester Christmas Bird Count. This was the 100th anniversary of the first Christmas Bird Counts which started on Christmas Day, 1900. The Bronx-Westchester Count started in 1924.

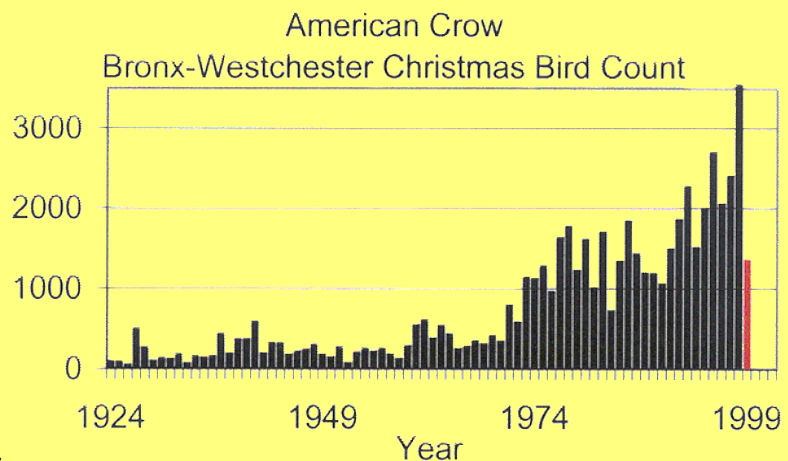
Highlights include the count's first Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco found near Wave Hill in the Bronx. A Sedge Wren (the first since 1961), Marsh Wren, Barred Owl and Yellow-breasted Chat were in Marshlands Conservancy. Two Peregrine Falcons were busy in Edith G. Read Sanctuary along with a Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow, last seen in 1977. Northern Gannet and both Black and Surf Scoter were on Long Island Sound. A Snowy Egret (4th count record) was first seen from Glen Island flying north and was found later at Five Island Park along with a Eurasian Wigeon. Red-necked Grebe was also off Glen Island. A Merlin was found in Lake Isle Country Club and a Rough-legged Hawk was in Eastchester. A Baltimore Oriole was in Riverdale and 37 Rusty Blackbird patrolled Van Cortlandt Swamp. Pelham Bay Park had over 2000 Common Grackles and both Barn and Saw-whet Owls.

Waterfowl were abundant this year. New high counts were set for Gadwall (227), Redhead (44), Lesser Scaup (1562), Hooded Merganser (271) and Ruddy Duck (2332). American Wigeon set a 25-year high and Common Merganser a 37-year high.

We again set a record for Red-bellied Woodpecker at 159.

Ring-necked Pheasant set an all time low of only 8 birds.

Health Commissioners were interested in our crow numbers due to the occurrence of West-Nile encephalitis this summer. American Crow numbers did dropped significantly from a record high of 3547 last year to only 1349 in 1999. BUT, this year's numbers are on average for crow numbers that were found in the 70's and 80's before the dramatic increase of crows seen in the 90's. One must ask if the explosion of American Crows in the 90's was one of the factors in the outbreak of West Nile-like Encephalitis this summer and if the drop to more "normal" levels of crows reduces the likelihood of an "outbreak" of the virus in 2000.



Thanks to all who volunteered. The 82 people on the count were our second highest participation level and included many new faces. Thirty-one of us enjoyed the compilation dinner, which was held at San Martino Ristorante this year. I heard many positive comments about the restaurant. The food was good and the waitresses were very attentive and accommodating. The complete compilation results are below.

Due to the holidays next winter, next year's count will be held Saturday (not Sunday!), December 23, 2000. Hope to see you there.

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	Species	Hudson Valley	Yonkers	West Bronx	East Bronx	Rye	Scarsdale	TOTALS	
1	Red-throated Loon					2	4	6	
2	Common Loon	1				3	2	6	
3	Pied-billed Grebe		6	1	2	1	3	13	43 year high
4	Horned Grebe				12	1	1	14	
5	Red-necked Grebe						1	1	Off Glen Island
6	NORTHERN GANNET					3	(3)	3	2nd year in a row
7	Great Cormorant				6	15	30	51	
8	Double-crested Cormorant	2		1	8	2	1	14	
9	Great Blue Heron		4	4	4	24	7	43	
10	SNOWY EGRET						1	1	Last seen 1987, 4th count record
11	Mute Swan		2	2	23	10	69	106	Lowest since 1986
12	Brant				41		50	91	
13	Canada Goose	366	1154	571	1048	601	3180	6920	
14	Wood Duck			17		11	19	47	
15	Green-winged Teal (Am.)			15			21	36	

	Species	Hudson Valley	Yonkers	West Bronx	East Bronx	Rye	Scarsdale	TOTALS	
16	American Black Duck	2	7	20	639	565	410	1643	
17	Mallard	31	343	268	468	392	633	2135	
	<i>mallard hybrid</i>		2	4	1	1	7	15	
18	Northern Pintail		1		2	3		6	
19	Northern Shoveler		12	94	2		22	130	
20	Gadwall	8		7	136	68	8	227	New High Count (92 in 1995)
21	EURASIAN WIGEON						1	1	Seen 4 times in last 5 years
22	American Wigeon				23	218	150	391	25 year high
23	Canvasback	10	21	2	36	30	24	123	
24	Redhead				43	1		44	New High Count (20 in 1986)
25	Ring-necked Duck		1				15	16	
26	Greater Scaup				3505	5800	160	9465	
27	Lesser Scaup				352	1200	10	1562	New High Count (1257 in 1998)
28	Oldsquaw					14	10	24	
29	Black Scoter						5	5	
30	Surf Scoter					2		2	
31	Common Goldeneye		2	2	46	55	54	159	
32	Bufflehead	1	3		315	200	488	1007	
33	Hooded Merganser		88	18	16	79	70	271	New High Count (196 in 1994)
34	Common Merganser	3	52	1				56	37 year high

	Species	Hudson Valley	Yonkers	West Bronx	East Bronx	Rye	Scarsdale	TOTALS	
35	Red-breasted Merganser		18		61	99	123	301	
36	Ruddy Duck		22	57	1413	238	602	2332	New High Count (1225 in 1992)
37	Turkey Vulture		1					1	
38	Northern Harrier				1			1	
39	Sharp-shinned Hawk		1	3	4	2	6	16	
40	Cooper's Hawk		1	1	3	1	3	9	
41	Northern Goshawk			1		1		2	
42	Red-shouldered Hawk		1		1	1		3	
43	Red-tailed Hawk	8	7	22	28	12	29	106	
44	Rough-legged Hawk						1	1	Eastchester, 1st in 8 years
45	American Kestrel				1	2		3	
46	Merlin						1	1	Lake Isle CC
47	Peregrine Falcon					2		2	5th year in a row
48	Ring-necked Pheasant			1	3		4	8	ALL TIME LOW !
49	Wild Turkey		3	1		3		7	
50	Virginia Rail					1		1	
51	American Coot		9	2		2	4	17	
	Black-bellied Plover				CW			CW	
52	Killdeer		1		7	8	3	19	
53	Ruddy Turnstone						15	15	
54	Sanderling						2	2	
55	Purple Sandpiper					15	90	105	

	Species	Hudson Valley	Yonkers	West Bronx	East Bronx	Rye	Scarsdale	TOTALS	
56	Dunlin					17	15	32	
57	American Woodcock						1	1	
58	Bonaparte's Gull					5	250	255	30 year high
59	Ring-billed Gull	196	1123	202	999	530	2324	5374	
60	Herring Gull	13	81	74	374	873	1757	3172	
61	Great Black-backed Gull	28	9	11	20	43	91	202	
62	Rock Dove	65	260	490	86	135	575	1611	
63	Mourning Dove	45	73	31	97	106	325	677	
64	BARN OWL				1			1	Last seen in 1992
65	Eastern Screech-Owl						3	3	
66	Great Horned Owl				3	CW	3	6	
67	Barred Owl					1		1	
68	Northern Saw-whet Owl				3			3	
69	Belted Kingfisher		4	4	3	4	10	25	
	RED HEADED WOODPECKER			CW				CW	
70	Red-bellied Woodpecker	5	15	32	19	20	68	159	New High Count (150 in 1998)
71	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	2	4	1	1	4	14	
72	Downy Woodpecker	19	11	16	12	29	78	165	
73	Hairy Woodpecker	7	2	7	4	10	35	65	36 year high
74	Northern Flicker	1	7	7	16	2	10	43	
75	Pileated Woodpecker	CW					1	1	
76	Blue Jay	26	21	138	76	75	124	460	

	Species	Hudson Valley	Yonkers	West Bronx	East Bronx	Rye	Scarsdale	TOTALS	
77	American Crow	69	118	320	124	126	592	1349	10 year low after record 3547 last year
78	Fish Crow		1	10	1	CW	4	16	
79	Black-capped Chickadee	32	64	107	64	197	310	774	
80	Tufted Titmouse	27	59	124	94	69	287	660	
81	Red-breasted Nuthatch		1	2		1	4	8	
82	White-breasted Nuthatch	13	22	47	11	40	68	201	
83	Brown Creeper	1	1			CW	2	4	
84	Carolina Wren	4	8	5	5	23	24	69	
85	Winter Wren	8	7	3	2	10	18	48	
86	SEDGE WREN					1		1	First since 1961, 8th count record
87	Marsh Wren					1		1	
	Golden-crowned Kinglet					CW		CW	
88	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1		1	1	1	2	6	
89	Hermit Thrush	4	1	4	4	8	7	28	
90	American Robin	2	2	79	18	68	247	416	
91	Gray Catbird		2	3	1	3	6	15	
92	Northern Mockingbird	13	19	36	9	27	75	179	
93	Brown Thrasher						1	1	
94	Cedar Waxwing			11	25		16	52	
95	European Starling	405	813	273	370	271	1493	3625	
96	Yellow-rumped Warbler			3				3	
97	Common Yellowthroat						1	1	In Larchmont

	Species	Hudson Valley	Yonkers	West Bronx	East Bronx	Rye	Scarsdale	TOTALS	
98	YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT					1		1	14th count record, 5th in 11 years
99	Northern Cardinal	31	20	44	18	63	141	317	
100	Eastern Towhee				1	1		2	Lowest since missed in 1952
101	American Tree Sparrow			20	76	62	16	174	
	Chipping Sparrow					CW		CW	
102	Field Sparrow	4						4	
103	Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow					1		1	Last seen in 1977, 6th count record
104	sharp-tailed sparrow, sp.					1		1	First since 1995
105	Fox Sparrow	2		10	12	26	41	91	24 year high
106	Song Sparrow	42	14	45	56	85	96	338	27 year low
107	Swamp Sparrow			1	2	5	2	10	17 year low
108	White-throated Sparrow	67	138	279	204	228	542	1458	
109	Dark-eyed (Slate-col.) Junco	95	144	228	25	141	576	1209	
	Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco			1				1	New to count
110	Red-winged Blackbird			65	102	10		177	
111	Eastern Meadowlark				1			1	
112	Rusty Blackbird			37				37	
113	Common Grackle			14	2017	16	48	2095	Highest since 1982

