

ROCKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Trip Report, Christmas Bird Count Summary

Date: 12/19/04

Thanks to all the participants and feeder counters for a successful count! Look for the final results in the next issue of the RAS OBSERVER

Weather: Heavy overcast; no snow on ground; ponds frozen over but running waters open. Light rain beginning about 3:00PM, changing to light snow by 7PM. Temperatures generally ranged between 33-34°F from midnight to about 8:30AM; then began rising to a peak of 39.0°F at 2:15PM. Temperatures then slowly declined to 36.6°F by 6:45PM; then fell precipitously to 17°F by the following midnight. Relative Humidity was approximately 87% throughout the day until 7PM, then dropped to 76% by the following midnight. Winds were calm until about 7 PM when gusts increased to at least 13 mph.

Participants: Debbie Bell, Frank Bonanno, Simon Bonner, Eugene Brown, Ruth Carlson, Drew Ciganik, Glenys Foster Roberts, Susan Freiman; Anne French, Padraic French, Elyse Fuller, Tom Fuller, Joanna Galdone, Stephanie Garber, Anita Gossett, Tom Harten, Gene Herskovics, Marianne Jenkins, Anna Kaufer, Sara Kaufer, Sam Kaufer, Karl Knoecklein, Bonnie Koop, Veronika Krause, Alice Luddington, Alyssa MacLean, Ken McNichol, Marsha Meyer, Ellen Micelli, Tom Micelli, Donna Nye, Robert Olley, Vince Plogar, Jim Previdi, Joan Totton, Jessie Traband, Carol Weiss, Alan Wells, Della Wells. (36 adults, 3 fledglings, a.k.a. children)

Feeder Counters: Peggy Bruner, Michael & Stephanie Garber, Margaret Gillespie, Jean Heyl, Laurence Pringle, Kevin Quill, Nancy Slowik, Marylou Smith, Irving Wolfe.

Coverage (Preliminary): 220 miles traveled by car, 46.5 miles traveled by foot.

Results: A total of 20,625 individuals, representing 73 species, were counted by the field observers. An additional 447 individuals were added by the feeder counters. Feeder counters tallied 23 species, three of which were not observed by the counters in the field (Common Grackle, Pine Siskin, and Fox Sparrow). Three additional species, Rough-legged Hawk, Common Snipe and Lesser Scaup, were reported by Drew Ciganik from the day after the count day. Counts were higher than 2002 and 2003. During those years, 16,623 and 18,983 individuals from 78 and 69 species, respectively, were counted. Based on previous results (see below), the number of individuals and species are within historic ranges. Of note, however, are the numbers of American Crow. Their numbers have declined sharply over recent years: 15,523 in 2000; 3,935 in 2001; 1,769 in 2002; and 354 in 2003. This year's count of 274 is the lowest since 1969. Some of the decline might be explained by changes in counting effort, but it is likely that the West Nile Virus is the major contributor.

Highlights: Bald eagles are certainly making a comeback! This year's count of 12 is the highest recorded in the history of Rockland's count (since 1947). For the North Rockland counters, the highlight was finally finding the pair of Great Horned Owls at the Stony Point Battlefield. The award for the most unusual count goes to District 4. In addition to their usually birds, they counted 14 dogs, 1 horse and 4 golf balls!



Photo 1. North Rockland Counters waiting for access to the Haverstraw Landfill.



Photo 2. Topping this year's list, SURPRISE!, Canada Goose (plus 1 odd duck).



Photo 3. Counting Ring-bills at the Sewage Treatment Plant. OK, it's not all fun and games!



Photo 4. Northern Mockingbird standing guard at Haverstraw Bay County Park.



Photo 5. Ring-billed Gull was the fifth most abundant species, “Simile Ralph, we’re about to be counted”!



Photo 6. The free-range roosters at Haverstraw Bay County Park didn’t make the count.



Photo 7. A lone Snow Goose intermixed with a small flock of Canada Geese at Willow Cove Marina.

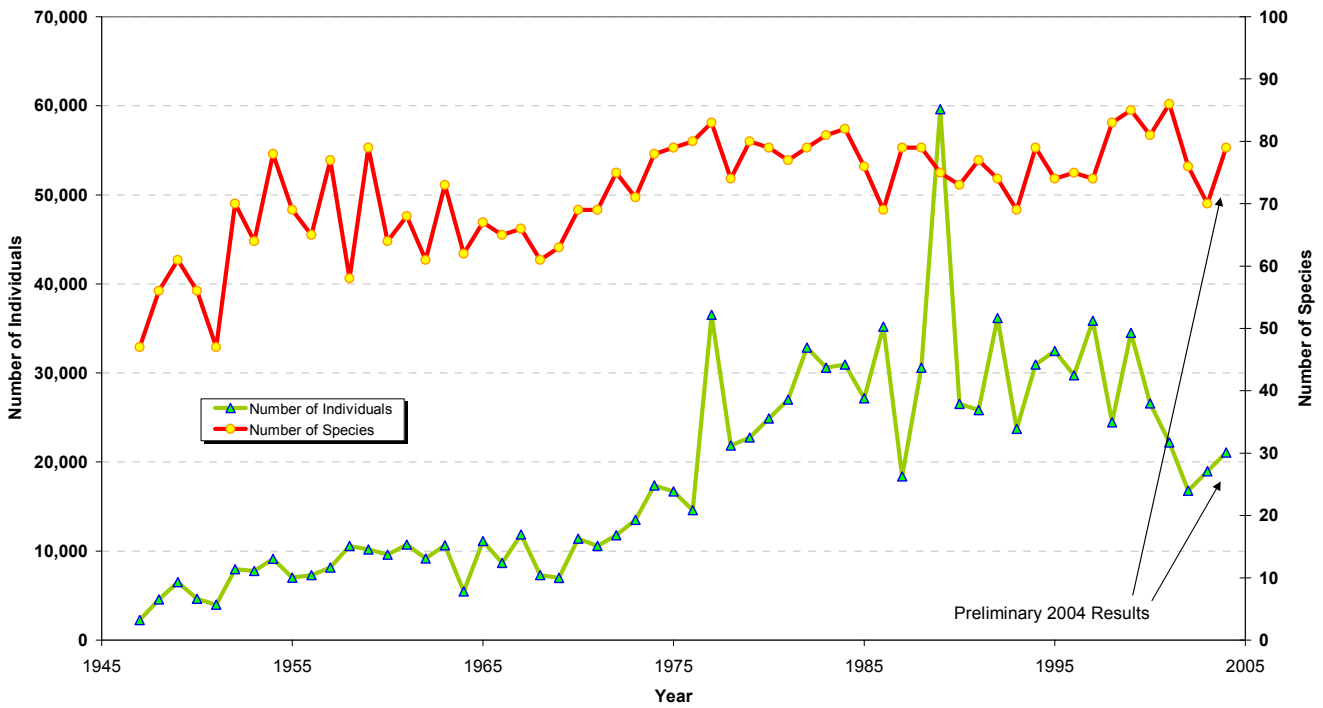


Photo 8. Red-tailed Hawk at the Haverstraw Landfill.



Photo 9. Part of the crowd at the Count Down Pot Luck.

RAS Christmas Bird Count



PRELIMINARY RESULTS

	Field	Feeder	Count Week	TOTAL
Canada Goose	4,049			4,049
European Starling	3,407			3,407
Common Merganser	3,284			3,284
Red-winged Blackbird	3,028			3,028
Ring-billed Gull	1,458			1,458
Rock Pigeon	712			712
Mallard	605			605
Dark-eyed Junco	533	41		574
Mourning Dove	454	62		516
American Robin	375			375
House Sparrow	260	86		346
American Crow	272	2		274
White-throated Sparrow	220	30		250
Black-capped Chickadee	149	23		172
Northern Cardinal	120	32		152
American Goldfinch	122	13		135
Song Sparrow	130	2		132
Downy Woodpecker	114	17		131
Tufted Titmouse	98	30		128
House Finch	72	44		116
Canvasback	100			100
American Tree Sparrow	84			84
American Black Duck	83			83
Cedar Waxwing	83			83
Bufflehead	62			62
Northern Mockingbird	55	2		57
Ruddy Duck	56			56
Blue Jay	46	9		55
White-breasted Nuthatch	42	12		54
Wild Turkey	35	10		45
Hooded Merganser	44			44
Red-tailed Hawk	42	2		44
Carolina Wren	39	4		43
Red-bellied Woodpecker	35	7		42
Gadwall	35			35
Herring Gull	29			29
Golden-crowned Kinglet	27			27
Double-crested Cormorant	26			26
Mute Swan	24			24
Turkey Vulture	24			24
Great Black-backed Gull	23			23
Snow Goose	21			21
Hairy Woodpecker	8	7		15
Great Blue Heron	14			14
Bald Eagle	12			12
Green-winged Teal	9			9
Northern Flicker	9			9
Eastern Screech-Owl	8			8
Pileated Woodpecker	8			8
Hermit Thrush	8			8
Northern Shoveler	7			7
Brown Creeper	7			7
Field Sparrow	7			7

Great Horned Owl	6		6
Belted Kingfisher	6		6
Rusty Blackbird	5		5
Pine Siskin		4	4
Savannah Sparrow	4		4
Fox Sparrow		4	4
Great Cormorant	3		3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3		3
Cooper's Hawk	3		3
Peregrine Falcon	3		3
Gray Catbird	1	2	3
Common Goldeneye	2		2
Northern Harrier	2		2
Common Raven	2		2
Winter Wren	2		2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2		2
Common Grackle		2	2
Purple Finch	2		2
Common Loon	1		1
Merlin	1		1
American Coot	1		1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1		1
Swamp Sparrow	1		1
Scaup spp.		0	0
Rough-legged Hawk		0	0
Common Snipe		0	0