

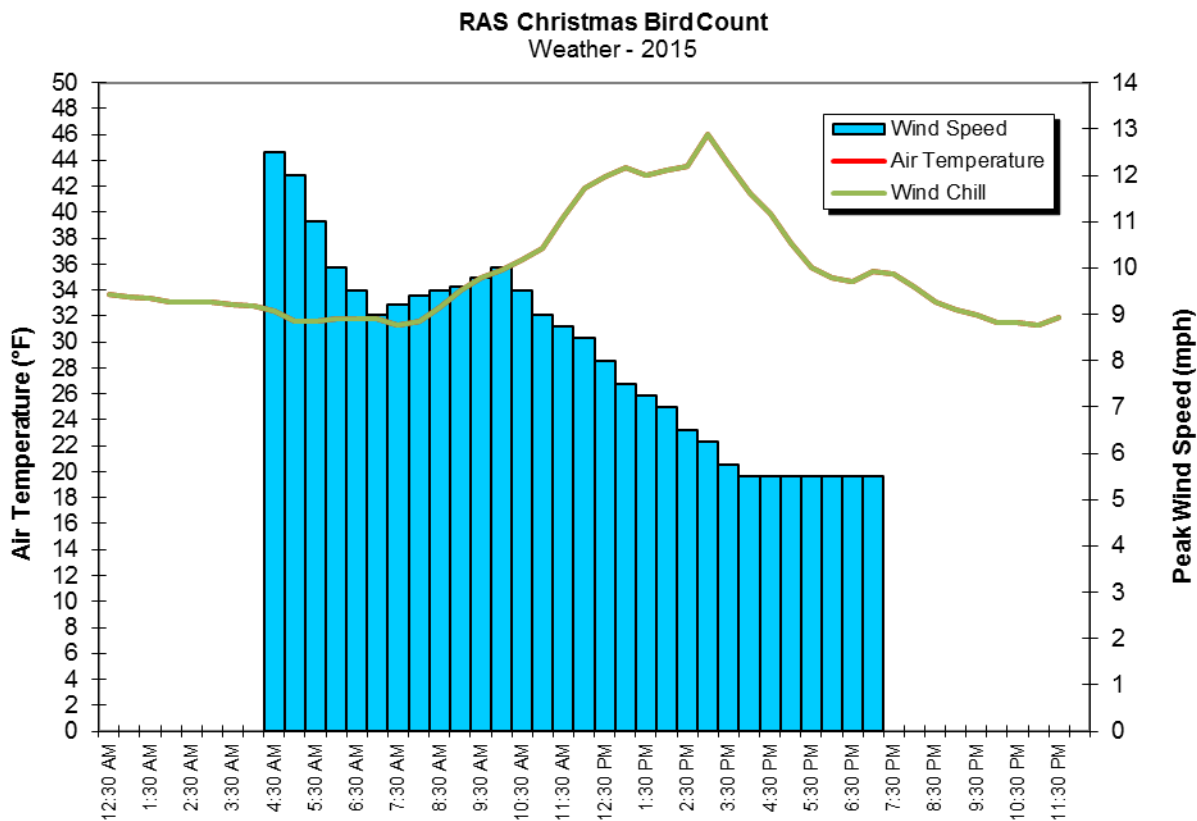
ROCKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

69th Christmas Bird Count Summary

Date: 12/20/2015

Thanks to all our field and feeder counters!

Weather: Temperatures ranged from 31 to 46 °F with Dew Point temperatures ranging from approximately 16 to 24 °F. Peak wind gusts ranged from approximately 5.5 to 12 mph. (*Note: station anemometer not working, wind speeds based on forecasts from previous day. No wind chill computed.*). No snow covered the ground and ponds and rivers were ice free. Record warm temperatures occurred during December prior to Count Day.



Field Observers (43 field counters):

District 1: Alan Wells, John Tyler, Della Wells, Julia Warger, Tom Cunningham

District 2: Gene Herskovics, Simon Streatfeild

District 3: Frank Kemmer, Caroline McDonald, Joyce Greenwald, Rich Greenwald

District 4: Nancy Slowik, Karen Nickeson, Joanna Galdone

District 5: Peter Johnson, Zenon Bachir, Karen D'Alessandri

District 6: Stephanie Garber, Michael Garber, Veronika Krause, Walter Aurell, Suzanne Barclay, Anita Gossett, Ronnie Smith

District 7: Carol Weiss, Ken McNichol, Bernie Doyle, Barry Babcock

District 8: Jim Previdi, Dan Albantides, Gene Brown, Ron Conzo, Judith Malo

District 9: Vince Plogar, Helena Bardusco, Marcello Bardusco, Frank Bonanno, Drew Ciganek, Tom Dow, Tom Harten, Chris Healy, Karl Knocklein, Susan Squittieri.

Feeder Counters (6 Locations): Karen D'Alessandri, Caroline McDonald, Donna Nye, Laurence Pringle, Nancy Slowik, David Weiss.

Coverage: 386 miles traveled by car, 56 miles traveled by foot; 57 hrs on foot and 35 hrs by car.

Results: Rockland Audubon Society conducted its 69th annual Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 20, 2015. Forty-one individuals participated in the field count, tallying 20,889 birds of 78 different species. Six feeder counters added 279 birds of 24 species. Combining both field and feeder counts, 21,168 individuals representing 79 species were tallied. Four additional species--Pied-billed Grebe, American Kestrel, Red-shouldered Hawk and Eastern Towhee--were observed during Count Week, bringing the total number of species to 83.

New maximum count numbers were established for Turkey Vulture (105 vs 78 in 2014), Common Raven (16 vs 15 in 2014), and American Robin (3,701 vs 1,115 in 2009).

Overall, both the number of species and the total number counted are typical for the period 1947 through 2014. The number of species ranks in the 63th percentile while the number of individuals ranks in the 59th percentile. However, when compared to our more modern count period (1978-2014), the numbers of species (43th percentile) and the number of individuals (27th percentile) are lower than normal.

The top five species (in order)—European Starling, American Robin, Common Merganser, Canada Goose, and Ring-billed Gull—made up 70.3% of all the birds counted.

Some Highlights:

Red-shouldered Hawk – One seen in District 1 during Count Week (12/19/2015). Red-shouldered Hawk was relatively common during the early years of the count, but now is rare. From 1947 through 1963 this species was seen on every count with as many as 12 individuals being seen. After 1963, it was seen only sporadically with generally only one or two individuals. The only exception was 1975, when four were seen. In the 39 counts after 1975, it has been seen on only seven counts. Except for one year when two were seen, all other sightings were of a single individual. Interestingly, Red-tailed Hawk shows pretty much the opposite pattern. They were rare prior to about 1960, then numbers increased slowly for a few years. After about 1975, Red-tailed Hawk counts increased quickly to about 40-50 in the last decade.

Merlin – Two sighted on Count Day in District 1. Merlin was not recorded on the Rockland CBC prior to 1992. Since that year, single sightings have occurred in only seven years; a double sighting has only occurred once (2008).

Black Vulture – First seen in 1995 when three were sighted but not seen regularly until 2005 (16 seen). The 59 seen in the 2015 CBC is typical of the post 2005 period.

Common Raven – First seen in 1998 and seen every year since. Numbers have been increasing over time with the 16 seen in 2015 establishing a new record high.

Misses

Scaup spp. – seen in 49 other years.

Yellow-rumped Warbler – seen in 53 other years.

Brown-headed Cowbird – seen in 49 other years.

Eastern Towhee – missed on Count Day (seen in 48 other years), but seen during Count Week

Ruffed Grouse and **Ring-necked Pheasant** were again missed this year. Both have been seen in 40 past years, but are now possibly extirpated from the county. Ruffed Grouse have not been counted since 2001 and Pheasant since 1995.

RAS Christmas Bird Count

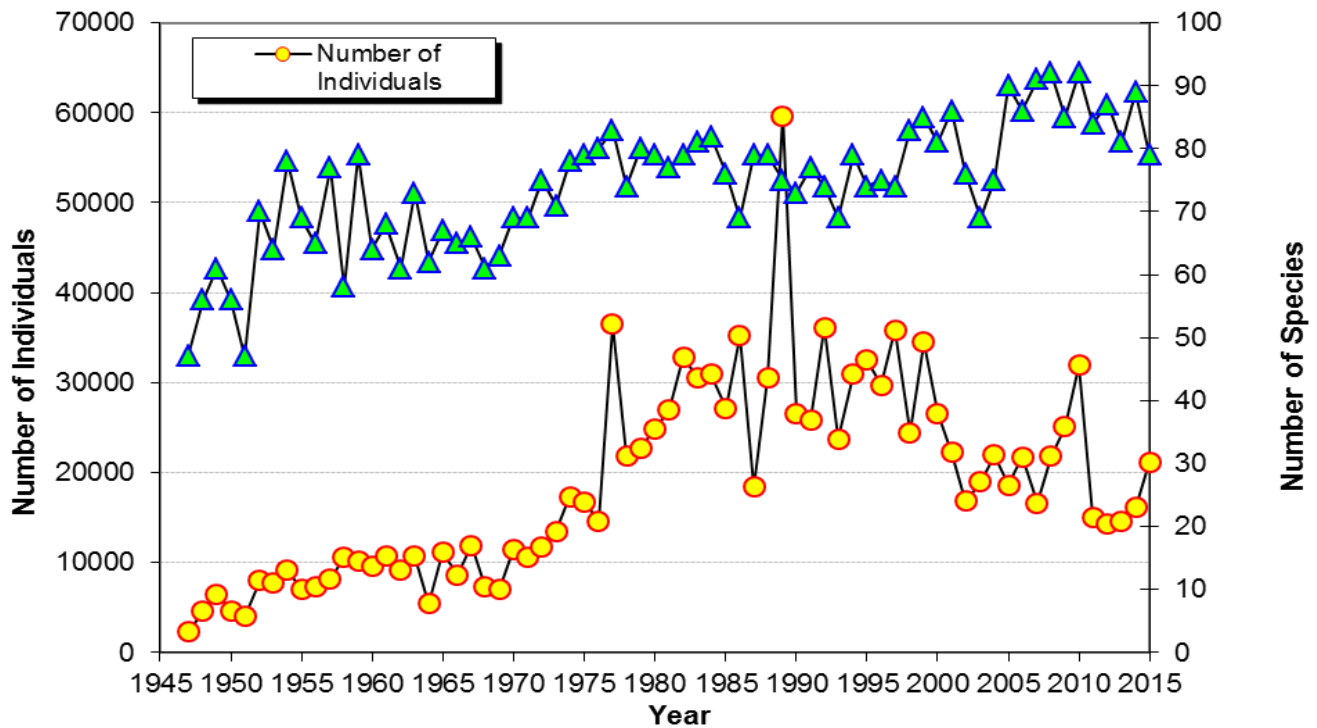




Photo 1. Red-shouldered Hawk at Bowline Pond on December 19, 2015. This species has been rare on counts since the mid-1970s. We were unable to relocate it on Count Day (Photo: Alan W. Wells).



Photo 2. First winter Ring-billed Gull at Peck's Pond on December 19 (pre-count). Ring-billed Gulls were fifth most abundant species on Count Day. (Photo: Alan W. Wells).



Photo 3. American Coot is typically common on Rockland Lake during ice free periods, but uncommon to rare throughout the rest of the county. We were surprised to find this individual at the fishing pond in Haverstraw Bay County Park. (Photo: Alan W. Wells).



Photo 4. Eastern Bluebird was common until 1960, then it largely disappeared. It is now making a comeback with this year's 16 birds the most seen since 1959. (Photo: Alan W. Wells).

ROCKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 2015

Common Name	Total	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	Years Seen	Previous High Count	New High ?	Current Year Rank
Canada Goose	2473	586	156	110	37	85	20	651	508	320	52	4401		4
Mute Swan	29	3	3		2			13	8		65	137		38
Wood Duck	4					4					35	42		58
Gadwall	68		17					14	31	6	39	189		29
American Black Duck	40	13	5			5		8		9	69	493		33
Mallard	540	129	130	23	6	22	4	97	82	47	68	2782		8
Northern Shoveler	94								90	4	35	133		25
Green-winged Teal	5		1							4	19	81		56
Canvasback	3									3	63	4203		65
Ring-necked Duck	9	9									39	60		48
Bufflehead	35	6			2			4	16	7	58	138		35
Common Goldeneye	3									3	59	155		65
Hooded Merganser	131	12			4	15	3	66	23	8	39	147		18
Common Merganser	2674				68	101	125	2296	83	1	68	5700		3
Ruddy Duck	92									92	62	761		27
Wild Turkey	26		6			8	2	6	4		23	83		40
Double-crested Cormorant	37	2			1			3	1	30	33	40		34
Great Cormorant	4	2							2		21	8		58
Great Blue Heron	31	2	1		1	3	4	10	3	7	44	53		36
Black Vulture	59	21	36							2	14	122		31
Turkey Vulture	105	37	10	6	5	2	2	1	3	39	29	78	Yes	21
Bald Eagle	15	5	2		1	1	1	4		1	38	44		43
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6		2					1	2		43	11		52
Cooper's Hawk	4	1						1	2		34	10		58
Red-tailed Hawk	53	4	8	6	1	4	5	7	3	15	63	68		32
Merlin	2	2									9	2		70
Peregrine Falcon	3	2							1		19	5		65
American Coot	8	1							7		62	304		49
Ring-billed Gull	1652	383	7	1	32	48	34	257	470	420	67	8922		5
Herring Gull	28	6						21		1	69	5636		39
Great Black-backed Gull	7	2						1	1	3	69	458		51
Rock Pigeon	388	124	3				25	36	166	34	39	1027		9
Mourning Dove	194	16	4	4	16	18	23	40	9	64	68	750		14
Eastern Screech-Owl	13	3				2		3		5	53	22		45
Great Horned Owl	1	1									40	11		75
Barred Owl	4				3					1	20	4		58
Belted Kingfisher	8	1	1				2	1	1	2	66	20		49
Red-bellied Woodpecker	93	13	15	3	8	5	9	10	6	24	45	118		26
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2		2								37	8		70
Downy Woodpecker	95	12	13	4	2	6	10	8	10	30	69	187		24
Hairy Woodpecker	14		2	1	1	1	3			6	69	58		44
Northern Flicker	11	2	1	1	4				2		67	34		46
Pileated Woodpecker	4		1						1		59	10		58

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Common Name	Total	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	Years Seen	Previous High Count	New High ?	Current Year Rank
Blue Jay	343	50	77	24	12	43	25	15	17	80	69	502		10
American Crow	296	42	50	50	33	23	29	18	19	32	69	38520		11
Fish Crow	6	3		2			1				41	86		52
Common Raven	16		4	1		1		1	4	5	18	15	Yes	42
Black-capped Chickadee	155	25	19	16	11	12	13	10	9	40	69	579		16
Tufted Titmouse	209	11	34	8	8	18	15	15	29	71	69	292		12
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2		1		1						46	17		70
White-breasted Nuthatch	97	11	15	4	5	21	9	6	6	20	69	150		23
Brown Creeper	1						1				67	26		75
Carolina Wren	19	2	2		1		2	1	2	9	60	59		41
Winter Wren	3	1	1					1			64	12		65
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5							1		4	63	41		56
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4						3			1	51	17		58
Eastern Bluebird	31	16	4		8			3			31	135		36
Hermit Thrush	6		2							4	47	14		52
American Robin	3702	38	1501	20	52	5	11	114	21	1940	68	1115	Yes	2
Gray Catbird	1									1	57	11		75
Northern Mockingbird	66	22	7	1	2	2	9	8	11	4	64	170		30
European Starling	4400	545	2501	30	22	150	432	216	41	463	69	13665		1
Cedar Waxwing	1				1						58	415		75
American Tree Sparrow	6	4	1							1	69	762		52
Field Sparrow	4		4								56	75		58
Savannah Sparrow	1									1	31	50		75
Fox Sparrow	11		9			1				1	59	32		46
Song Sparrow	104	20	36		2	1		11	11	23	69	322		22
Swamp Sparrow	2		2								60	38		70
White-throated Sparrow	200	25	36	4	8	1	14	10	8	94	69	587		13
Dark-eyed Junco	694	143	108	23	12	134	51	23	66	134	69	1224		7
Northern Cardinal	123	17	35		2	16	10	11	4	28	69	339		19
Red-winged Blackbird	148		18							130	69	4230		17
Rusty Blackbird	3		2				1				25	121		65
Common Grackle	171		151	15		2	3				60	8817		15
Purple Finch	2		2								60	158		70
House Finch	111	36	33	4	2	4	18		6	8	54	333		20
American Goldfinch	74	32	10	5	4	1	1	10		11	69	486		28
House Sparrow	1084	208	65	25	35	51	39	472	61	128	69	1293		6
TOTAL COUNT	21168	2651	5156	391	415	816	961	4510	1843	4425				
TOTAL SPECIES	79	49	52	26	37	35	38	46	39	57				