

Highlights of the Christmas Bird Count — December 2024

By Kayla Niner

The Christmas Bird Count was a rare partly sunny day for Michigan winter, albeit a cold one. We had a great turnout and every section was out looking for every bird in their territories. Our overall total this year was 70 species, which is down from 73 last year. Notable species included a Killdeer, a Saw-whet Owl, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and a Ruddy Shelduck, a probable escapee that still caused tons of excitement among the birders. Four sections also turned up a Sharp-shinned Hawk, a species that seems to favor the count circle area.

An afterglow was held at the Wint Nature Center at Independence Oaks and participants shared details of their best birds of the day and enjoyed the pizza bought by OBA.



Photo: Kayla Niner

Count Summary Report

Printout Date: 1/20/2025

Count Name: Pontiac	Count Code: MIPO	Count Date: 12/14/2024
Organizations & Sponsors: Oakland , Oakland County Parks & Recreation	# of Party Hours: 109.75	Species reported on count date: 70

Compiler(s)

First Name	Last Name	Email	Is Primary Compiler
Scott	Jennex	cccta@aol.com	Yes

Start & End Times

Start time	End time
04:00 AM	05:00 PM

Effort

Observers	
In Field	Total Number: 66
	Minimum Number of Parties (daylight): 14
	Maximum Number of Parties (daylight): 17
At Feeders	Total Number: 6

Party Hours and Distance (excludes viewing at feeders and nocturnal birding)			
By	Hours	Distance	Units
Foot	26.75	29.55	Miles
Car	83.00	600.10	Miles
Air			
All-Terrain Vehicle			
Bicycle			
Dog Sled			
Golfcart			
Horseback			
Motorized Boat			
Non-Motorized Boat			
Skis/Xc-Skis			
Snowmachine			
Snowshoe			
Wheelchair			

Other Time and Distance			
	Hours	Distance	Units
At Feeders	11.00		

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Nocturnal Birding	7.50	35.75	Miles
Total Party	109.75	629.65	Miles

Weather

Weather Summary			
Temperature	Minimum: 12.0 Fahrenheit	Maximum: 31.0 Fahrenheit	
Wind Direction	East		
Wind Velocity	Minimum: 0.00 Miles/hour	Maximum: 9.00 Miles/hour	
Snow Depth	Minimum: 0.00 Inches	Maximum: 1.00 Inches	
Still Water	Partly Open		
Moving Water	Partly Frozen		
AM and PM Conditions			
Cloud Cover	AM: Partly Clear	PM: Partly Cloudy	
AM Rain	None		
AM Snow	None		
PM Rain	None		
PM Snow	None		

Checklist

Species	Number or cw	Flags	Max Number	# Of Counts	Editor Comm.
Canada Goose	923		2991/94	53	
Mute Swan	134		134/125	42	
Trumpeter Swan	13		15/123	11	
Ruddy Shelduck	1	US,	1/125	1	
Gadwall	6		13/84	10	
American Black Duck	7		44/84	51	
Mallard	805		1675/103	53	
Canvasback	1		197/102	28	
Redhead	4		60/120	26	
Ring-necked Duck	44		956/124	21	
Bufflehead	7		189/113	34	
Common Goldeneye	35		448/95	42	
Hooded Merganser	44		108/124	32	
Common Merganser	43		929/93	35	
Wild Turkey	138		232/123	30	
Great Blue Heron (Blue form)	5		12/102	40	
Turkey Vulture	6		30/117	20	

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Northern Harrier	3		5/102	27	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	HC,	14/101	46	
Cooper's Hawk	17		22/108	51	
Accipiter sp.	2		3/86	28	
Bald Eagle	9		12/124	17	
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	HC,	5/110	41	
Red-tailed Hawk	54		116/94	53	
Sandhill Crane	81		160/116	17	
Killdeer	1	US, HC,	1/125	2	
Ring-billed Gull	245		6531/100	52	
Herring Gull	6	LC	5702/107	51	
gull sp.	5		2033/94	42	
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	358		770/107	50	
Mourning Dove	287		2287/102	53	
Eastern Screech-Owl	16		37/85	43	
Great Horned Owl	2	LC	35/87	52	
Barred Owl	1		4/87	28	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	US,	2/116	8	
Belted Kingfisher	3		9/82	51	
Red-headed Woodpecker	8		12/78	43	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	79		161/109	52	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	US,	3/73	15	
Downy Woodpecker	79		310/88	53	
Hairy Woodpecker	13		78/86	53	
Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted)	12		43/103	36	
Pileated Woodpecker	9	HC,	10/123	25	
American Kestrel	2		42/78	51	
Merlin	2		3/117	10	
Northern Shrike	1		6/78	34	
Blue Jay	363		1289/85	53	
American Crow	647		1651/102	53	
Black-capped Chickadee	367		1736/88	53	
Tufted Titmouse	156		409/95	53	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	6		106/94	50	
White-breasted Nuthatch	128		376/86	53	
Brown Creeper	2		30/87	53	
Winter Wren	1		2/122	5	
Carolina Wren	2		5/124	17	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	17		58/87	48	

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Eastern Bluebird	63		451/103	47	
American Robin	524		1318/105	51	
European Starling	3293		95249/106	53	
Cedar Waxwing	16	LC	1344/85	53	
Snow Bunting	40		244/88	28	
American Tree Sparrow	98		2402/86	53	
Fox Sparrow	3		3/125	13	
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)	766		1455/86	41	
White-throated Sparrow	3		77/90	49	
Song Sparrow	8		118/90	53	
Swamp Sparrow	4		8/84	45	
sparrow sp.	1		30/90	19	
Northern Cardinal	155		629/96	53	
Common Grackle	2		36/95	33	
House Finch	155		2200/95	44	
Purple Finch	2		85/96	46	
American Goldfinch	142		1851/89	53	
House Sparrow	321		2529/89	53	
Total Individuals	10805				
Total Species Reported	70				

cw = Reported count week
 US = Flagged as an unusual species
 HC = Flagged as an unusually high count
 LC = Flagged as an unusually low count

Species Requiring Rare Bird Reports to be Submitted to Regional Editor

Species

Ruddy Shelduck [*Tadorna ferruginea*]

Killdeer [*Charadrius vociferus*]

Northern Saw-whet Owl [*Aegolius acadicus*]

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker [*Sphyrapicus varius*]

Special Aspects