

# 2022 Iowa City Christmas Bird Count

## Chris Edwards

The 72nd annual Iowa City Christmas Bird Count was held Sunday, December 18, 2022. The count area is a 15-mile diameter circle centered on Hwy. 965 and Penn Street in North Liberty, encompassing North Liberty, Coralville, Solon, Tiffin, and portions of Iowa City, as well as Lake Macbride and most of the Coralville Reservoir. Temperatures on count day were below average at 8-20° F, with clear skies and W/NW winds of 5-15 mph. Rivers and streams were mostly frozen, still bodies of water were mostly frozen, and there was a trace of snow cover.

### *Results*

This year we found 75 species, well above the ten-year count average of 68 species, and the third straight year with 72 or more species. A surprisingly high tally of 18 waterfowl species were found. The record high for the count is 81 species found in 2012. This year we tallied 14,669 individual birds, near the ten-year average of 15,054.

The most unexpected find was an Ovenbird, photographed by first-time feeder watchers Jim and Jean Wiese in their yard near City Park in Iowa City. This one-day-wonder was not seen before or after the count. It is the second Ovenbird found on our count; the first was in 2002, also in Iowa City.

Other rare birds this year included an Eastern Towhee in Hickory Hill Park (fifth all-time record and first since 1999), an apparently injured American White Pelican at Lake Macbride (sixth all-time record), two Red-breasted Mergansers at Waterworks Prairie Park (sixth all-time record), three Green-winged Teal above the Coralville Reservoir Dam and at Kent Park (eighth all-time record), and two Harris' Sparrows at Hawkeye Wildlife Management Area (ninth all-time record). Other unusual species (seen on four or fewer counts in the last ten years) were Wood Duck (first since 2007), Northern Pintail, Ruddy Duck, Northern Bobwhite (first since 2006), Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Horned Lark.

Six species were found in record numbers this year: Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Cooper's Hawk, Tufted Titmouse, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, and Fox Sparrow. Other species seen in numbers significantly above the ten-year average were Mourning Dove, Rough-legged Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker (highest count since 1989), Blue Jay, Red-breasted Nuthatch (ten-year high), House Sparrow (ten-year high), Purple Finch (ten-year high), American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco (ten-year high), White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow.

Some species were seen in significantly below-average numbers: Mallard, Wild Turkey (second straight year in single digits), Rock Pigeon, Ring-billed Gull, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Crow, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch, and Pine Siskin. Expected species not found this year were Eurasian Collared-Dove and Northern Shrike.

Golden Eagle and Winter Wren were seen during the count week, but not on count day.

### *Count Effort*

This year there were 45 field observers, including eight first-time participants, in 15 field parties. They spent 82 total party-hours in the field, above the 10-year average of 73 hours. Field participants were Elizabeth Aubrey, Kyle Belcher, Becky Benson, Tom Bootsmiller, Fawn Bowden, Jayden Bowen, Mary Bowler, Brian Broderick, Mark Brown, Russell Brown, Barry Buschelman, Diane Buxton, Leona Buxton, Chris Caster, Edith Dawson, Erica Dawson, Jerry Denning, Sandy Eads, Chris Edwards, Jim Fuller,

Karole Fuller, Peter Hansen, Rick Hollis, James Huntington, Jim Kettelkamp, Nancy Lynch, Terri Macey, Jamie McCoy, Ramona McGurk, Hank Miguel, Jenny Miller, JJ Miller, Mary Noble, Jason Paulios, Eli Perencevich, Marko Perencevich, Linda Quinn, Deb Rolfes, Mark Rolfes, Linda Rudolph, James Scheib, Janet Seiz, Jane Shuttleworth, Sharon Somers, Eliza Willis.

Three parties spent a total of 5 hours owl watching, above the ten-year average of 3.2 hours.

There were 20 feeder watchers in 12 locations. They spent 40 hours watching feeders, far above the ten-year average of 27 hours. Feeder watchers were Cindy Asmussen, Barbara Beaumont, Kyle & Lauren Belcher, Kaci Carolan & Ed Kuhrt, Janet & Rick Hollis, Kathy & Van Martensen, Pauline Obmascher, Sharon Somers, Cindy Spading, Jim & Terri Stoner, Ronnye Wieland, and Jim & Jean Wiese.

This year we met at the North Liberty Community Center for a noon lunch and compilation. We did not meet for an evening meal. We collected \$100 in donations for the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count program.

Nationally, this year marked the 123rd consecutive Christmas Bird Count. The results of all counts from 1900 to the present are available at [www.audubon.org/bird/cbc](http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc). A table showing the results of every Iowa City count from 1951 to the present is available at [www.iowacitybirdclub.org](http://www.iowacitybirdclub.org).

Thanks to everyone who participated!

#### SPECIES LIST

Cackling Goose	2	Cooper's Hawk	9	Eastern Bluebird	14
Canada Goose	7589	Bald Eagle	99	American Robin	10
Trumpeter Swan	37	Red-tailed Hawk	45	European Starling	694
Wood Duck	2	Rough-legged Hawk	6	Cedar Waxwing	54
Northern Shoveler	1	<i>Buteo</i> sp.	2	House Sparrow	981
Gadwall	8	Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	133
Mallard	376	Great Horned Owl	6	House Finch	83
Northern Pintail	3	Barred Owl	4	Purple Finch	18
Green-winged Teal	3	Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	Pine Siskin	1
Redhead	4	Belted Kingfisher	3	American Goldfinch	108
Ring-necked Duck	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	53	Fox Sparrow	3
Lesser Scaup	3	Red-bellied Woodpecker	100	American Tree Sparrow	487
Bufflehead	1	Downy Woodpecker	136	Dark-eyed Junco	964
Common Goldeneye	14	Hairy Woodpecker	23	White-crowned Sparrow	22
Hooded Merganser	3	Northern Flicker	24	Harris' Sparrow	2
Common Merganser	10	Pileated Woodpecker	8	White-throated Sparrow	69
Red-breasted Merganser	2	American Kestrel	10	Song Sparrow	21
Ruddy Duck	8	Blue Jay	214	Swamp Sparrow	5
Northern Bobwhite	1	American Crow	206	Eastern Towhee	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	13	Horned Lark	16	Red-winged Blackbird	806
Wild Turkey	7	Black-capped Chickadee	275	Brown-headed Cowbird	14
Rock Pigeon	146	Tufted Titmouse	103	Common Grackle	4
Mourning Dove	215	Red-breasted Nuthatch	11	Ovenbird	1
Ring-billed Gull	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	102	Northern Cardinal	254
American White Pelican	1	Brown Creeper	4		
Northern Harrier	5	Carolina Wren	3		