

Glenolden (Delaware County, Pa) CBC
December 19, 2015

The 96th Glenolden Christmas Bird Count, part of the 116th National Audubon Society CBC, was held Saturday, December 19, 2015. A whopping 97 individuals participated in our count this year. This is the third highest number of participants since 1960 and probably the third highest ever. Interestingly the two previous highs were 108 in 1983 and 121 in 1982. These are real outliers as the average number of participants around that time looks to be no more than half those numbers. Perhaps one of the old timers could offer some explanation for that.

This year we mourn the loss of Delaware County birding icon Skip Conant. Skip participated in 31 of our CBCs. Through his birding classes Skip brought many new birders into the passion we all enjoy. Those who had the privilege of birding with Skip were also educated in frog calls, reptile ID, Mozart and the Civil War. His presence is missed.

However the future looks good as we welcomed 27 new participants to our count this year which I suspect must be a record. Thank you all for bringing new birders into the fold.

Eighty four field observers covered our circle in 32 parties and 13 participants kept an eye on 10 feeders in the circle. Field observers covered 143.5 miles in 112 hours by foot and 310 miles in 37 hours by car. Eight areas also reported owling in the predawn hours. We tallied 21,300 individual birds representing 88 species on count day plus 3 species seen during count week but not on the big day (**tundra swan, common loon and American pipit**) for a grand total of 91 species. This year's species count is similar to the past few years but lower than the 10 and 20 year average of around 95 species.

We added one new species to our all-time list this year (**American redstart**) so our all-time total now stands at 195 species.

Count day was relatively warm starting at about 32 degrees and reaching into the 40s. It was pretty windy but no precipitation and no frozen water. As you all know we had an unusually warm winter up to that point and veteran birders expected low numbers, especially of winter residents. Indeed numbers were down but perhaps not as badly as many had feared. Since the number of geese is unpredictably variable each year I like to compare totals without geese. This year our total of individuals without geese was 17,766. Last year we counted 23,291 individuals minus geese which was high relative to the past 10 year "minus geese" average of around 19,000. My conclusion is numbers were down but could have been worse.

Perhaps the most telling indication of the warm early winter was the low number of our friends the **golden-crowned kinglets**. We tallied only 9 individuals which is the lowest since 9 were counted in 1972. The previous 10 year average of **golden-crowned kinglets** is 33. **Ruby-crowned kinglets** were not high as might be expected with the warmer weather. We counted 9 compared to the previous 10 year average of 7 individuals. Some birders professed concern that **white-throated sparrows** were also staying up in the mountains due to the warm weather. Perhaps some were. We counted 1,239 **white-throated sparrows**, the lowest since 2009. The past 10 year average is 1,418.

The warm winter almost certainly accounts for our new species to the CBC this year. The sharp-eyed team of Brian Byrnes, Art McMorris and Dick Eales found an **American redstart** (yellowstart) on the Bridle Path at Ridley Creek State Park. Because we see so many in spring and fall it is somewhat

surprising that it is such a rare CBC bird. Brian did some research and reports “ebird has only one other December record of **American Redstart** in Pennsylvania, from State College in 1981. There is a record from John Heinz in late November, 2010. The CBC database shows just five previous AMREs on CBCs in Pennsylvania, last in 2002/2003.”

The reason we don't see many warblers in winter is that they are almost exclusively insectivores. The warbler we see most often in winter is **yellow-rumped warbler** (17 this year) which is unusually well adapted to seeds and berries i.e. winter food. Birds of North America Online reports that **American redstart** eats mostly insects in winter but will take seeds & berries in late fall and winter. The same is true of **pine warbler** and one was found ready to tee off on the first tee at Merion Golf Club by Dave McDonald and Rob Bierregaard. **Pine warbler** is a bit more common on our CBC. **Pine warbler** has been found on 14 previous counts including 3 individuals in 2010. A non-warbler warm weather bird, **eastern phoebe**, was found this year. It has been present on 26 previous counts and has a penchant for hardiness being an early spring arrival and late fall departure bird.

Other birds of note this year were 20 **long-tailed ducks** on Springton Reservoir spotted by Win Shafer and Alan Crawford and a **red-headed woodpecker** in Middletown Twp that has been staked out since the fall in an area of tree damage from the big wind storm in June. Damon Orsetti made sure he recorded this one for us. **Long-tailed duck** has been found on 27 previous counts with a record of 190 in 1975. **Red-headed woodpecker** has been tallied on 11 previous counts, all single birds except 2 in 1982.

Common ravens were first documented to nest in Delaware County in 2013. Single individuals were counted on our CBC in 2013 and 2014, but on only two other occasions in 1995 and 1999. This year 3 individuals were found. One at Penn State Delco which is within raven reach of the nesting site and more interestingly a pair was seen flying over Merion Golf Club raising the question of possible nesting in that area.

We had high counts for three species this year, all more or less expected: **wild turkey** 22 (13 in 2011), **bald eagle** 20 (13 in 2011 & 2013), and **yellow-bellied sapsucker** 25 (21 in 2010).

Near high counts were **black vulture** 167 (191 in 2010), and **pileated woodpecker** 16 (17 in 2007).

Of the birds that have been seen on greater than 50 previous counts that we missed this year only **American wigeon** and **brown-headed cowbird** stand out to me.

Northern irruption visitors were practically nonexistent. We had zero **Black-capped Chickadees**, now for two consecutive years. There was only one **red-breasted nuthatch**, found at Tyler Arboretum, 9 **Purple Finches** and 3 **Pine Siskins**. I guess we're due for a big irruption!

Here is a list of Participants with their years of service. New participants, 5 year anniversaries and those with over 25 years participation are in bold lettering for special recognition. I suspect, no I'm certain, some of the years of service are inaccurate. Please let me know if yours needs to be corrected:

Ellis Akers (44), **Alison Barnes** (5), Gary Becker (12), Debbie Beer (4), Brian Bernero (2), **Sarah Berrettini** (1), Natalie Berry (2), Rob Bierregaard (3), Sarah Boucas-Neto (9), Kevin Browngoehl (2), **Louise Brunel** (1), Tom Bush (3), Ben Bussman (3), Brian Byrnes (7), Henry Cadwalader (2), Donna Chadderton (7), **Ron Chadderton** (1), Bruce Childs (4), **Bill Cranny** (5), Alan Crawford III (7), **Alvera Crocetto** (41), Nicholas Crocetto (3), **Nick Crocetto** (41), Cynthia Curry (14), **Ann Dempsey** (1), Don DePietro (6), **Petra DePietro** (1), Dick Eales (2), Andrew Eberly (11), **David Eberly** (25), Phyllis Fingerhood (21), Kevin Fryberger (7), **Westin Fryberger** (1), Cole Gaboriault (2), **Stephanie Gaboriault** (5), **Tony Geiger** (1), **Blake Goll** (1), **Kim Gruener** (1), **Brian Hall** (1), Liz Hoffmann (2), **Emily Holtz** (1), **Patty Holtz** (1), **Rich Horwitz** (27), **Gail Hunn** (1), Lois Hunn (17), Hiroshi Iizuka (4), **Letitia Jeavons** (5),

Kristen Johnson (5), **Sheryl Johnson** (20), Steve Kapski (21), Bob Kelly (7), Noel Kelly (3), Dan Kobza (4), **Mary Ellen Krober** (29), **Bill Lucas** (1), Chelsea Lucas (7), Sue Lucas (8), Dave Luning (3), Dave McDonald (4), **Jennifer McDougall** (1), **Doris McGovern** (32), **Art McMorris** (5), Kathy Meermans (9), Alison Mostrom (24), **Gregg Nichols** (2), Damon Orsetti (3), **Carl Perretta** (26), Jason Porter (4), Chris Pugliese (7), **Nick Pulcinella** (46), Brian Quindlen (9), **Ann Reeves** (1), **Tom Reeves** (41), **Matt Ritter** (1), **Yusuf Romaine-Elkhardi** (1), **Frank Roman** (1), Lynn Roman (4), **Navin Sasikumar** (1), Robert Scott (4), **Marcy Seminoff** (1), Alice Severeid (7), Win Shafer (11), Charles Smith (8), Max Smith (2), **Jonathan Stanton** (1), **Katie Starke** (1), Gary Stolz (9), **Carol Storey** (10), **Don Storey** (1), **Marcia Tate** (5), **Gloria Todor** (10), Pat Trevelino (11), Scott Tuttle (9), **Anthony Uhrich** (1), Geoff Veith (2), **Mark Wallace** (1).

Attached is the final report I submitted to Audubon which includes the complete species list for this year's count. It lists frequency data which can be a bit confusing i.e. I still don't completely understand how they get some of the numbers but if you have a question let me know and I'll try to help.

For a detailed exploration of historical data for our count and all CBCs I recommend you check out www.christmasbirdcount.org. For researching historical results of our count use our count code which is PAGL.

Our CBC is held on the first Saturday of the count period which is December 14 to January 5 every year. Therefore our next Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday December 17 2016. Mark your calendars!

Thank you all once again for your participation, especially my team captains who make my job so much easier. I hope you are all looking forward to next year's CBC so stay healthy, stay in shape and be ready to get back out there again!

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Count Summary Report

Printout Date: 1/24/2016

Count Name: Delaware County (Glenolden)	Count Code: PAGL	Count Date: 12/19/2015
Organizations & Sponsors:	# of Party Hours: 180.50	Species reported on count date: 88

Compiler(s)

First Name	Last Name	Email	Is Primary Compiler
David	Eberly	david.eberly@gmail.com	Yes

Start & End Times

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

Effort

Observers	
In Field	Total Number: 84
	Minimum Number of Parties (daylight): 32
	Maximum Number of Parties (daylight): 32
At Feeders	Total Number: 13

Party Hours and Distance (excludes viewing at feeders and nocturnal birding)			
By	Hours	Distance	Units
Foot	143.50	112.00	Miles
Car	37.00	310.00	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	51.50		

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Nocturnal Birding	12.75	29.00	Miles
Total Party	180.50	422.00	Miles

Weather

Weather Summary			
Temperature	Minimum: 32.0 Fahrenheit	Maximum: 42.0 Fahrenheit	
Wind Direction	West		
Wind Velocity	Minimum: 11.00 Miles/hour	Maximum: 31.00 Miles/hour	
Snow Depth	Minimum:	Maximum:	
Still Water	Open		
Moving Water	Open		
AM and PM Conditions			
Cloud Cover	AM: Partly Cloudy	PM: 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.
Snow Goose	200		2115/112	38	
Canada Goose	3234		15880/109	68	
Mute Swan	1		12/113	26	
Tundra Swan	cw		172/114	43	
Gadwall	16		82/102	43	
American Black Duck	65		13007/39	86	
Mallard	409		2245/76	84	
Northern Shoveler	65		314/115	55	
Northern Pintail	30		107537/52	79	
Green-winged Teal	150		2000/76	43	
Ring-necked Duck	1		105/80	57	
Long-tailed Duck	20		190/76	28	
Bufflehead	12		85/79	69	
Hooded Merganser	25		95/114	53	
Common Merganser	12		335/90	84	
Wild Turkey	22	HC,	22/116	9	
Common Loon	cw		4/102	31	
Pied-billed Grebe	1		24/80	59	

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Double-crested Cormorant	80		90/115	34	
Great Blue Heron (Blue form)	29		96/93	76	
Black Vulture	167		191/111	29	
Turkey Vulture	179		322/111	72	
Northern Harrier	1		34/51	85	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	17		45/102	64	
Cooper's Hawk	12		26/108	74	
Bald Eagle	20	HC,	20/116	36	
Red-shouldered Hawk	5		15/52	83	
Red-tailed Hawk	77		117/102	96	
Ring-billed Gull	680		4003/84	84	
Herring Gull	26		10000/71	90	
Great Black-backed Gull	23		220/93	67	
gull sp.	1		70/98	2	
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	251		1521/93	48	
Mourning Dove	623		1743/93	80	
Eastern Screech-Owl	22		66/83	34	
Great Horned Owl	4		44/89	65	
Belted Kingfisher	16		41/99	75	
Red-headed Woodpecker	1		2/83	12	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	187		205/112	59	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	25	HC,	25/116	55	
Downy Woodpecker	183		262/82	95	
Hairy Woodpecker	35		50/108	92	
Northern Flicker	65		134/85	26	
Pileated Woodpecker	16		17/108	50	
American Kestrel	2		66/78	91	
Merlin	1		3/103	23	
Peregrine Falcon	1		3/112	33	
Eastern Phoebe	1		2/93	27	
Blue Jay	322		1158/82	90	
American Crow	475		4164/93	72	
Fish Crow	7		220/70	74	
Common Raven	3	HC,	3/116	5	
Carolina Chickadee	364		1045/82	75	
Tufted Titmouse	263		605/83	91	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1		325/82	69	
White-breasted Nuthatch	208		242/83	92	

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Brown Creeper	6		45/83	89	
Winter Wren	11		40/113	7	
Marsh Wren	1		14/67	25	
Carolina Wren	137		401/93	93	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	9		123/93	85	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	9		33/73	68	
Eastern Bluebird	101		132/106	70	
Hermit Thrush	17		29/108	74	
American Robin	3077		9867/102	81	
Gray Catbird	6		23/85	69	
Northern Mockingbird	48		284/83	70	
European Starling	3027		19000/71	95	
American Pipit	cw		50/33	32	
Cedar Waxwing	127		4649/86	70	
American Redstart	1	HC,	1/116	1	
Pine Warbler	1		3/111	15	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	17		63/85	9	
American Tree Sparrow	4		3700/66	96	
Field Sparrow	18		320/67	92	
Fox Sparrow	12		248/59	86	
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)	1044		2071/82	81	
White-crowned Sparrow	2		87/75	55	
White-throated Sparrow	1239		2926/58	95	
Song Sparrow	371		3600/67	95	
Swamp Sparrow	13		520/66	88	
Eastern Towhee	49		136/112	41	
Northern Cardinal	352		967/89	96	
Red-winged Blackbird	1613		6300/66	92	
Rusty Blackbird	7		400/41	69	
Common Grackle	343		9377/95	57	
House Finch	378		2673/94	58	
Purple Finch	9		557/78	85	
Pine Siskin	3		324/78	46	
American Goldfinch	275		1400/62	69	
House Sparrow	317		1600/72	86	
Total Individuals	21300				
Total Species Reported	88				

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<p>cw = Reported count week US = Flagged as an unusual species HC = Flagged as an unusually high count LC = Flagged as an unusually low count</p>	
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Species Requiring Rare Bird Reports to be Submitted to Regional Editor

Species

Special Aspects

<p>A possible long-eared owl was heard in the predawn hours at Tyler Arboretum but could not be confirmed so was not counted.</p>
