

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Robert H. Stymeist, Brookline

This year marks the 83rd anniversary of the original Christmas Bird Count, taken on Christmas Day, 1900, by an intrepid group of naturalists in twenty-five locations mostly here in the northeast. The now annual event has grown from its original twenty-five areas and twenty-seven participants to an amazing 1,418 locations and 34,863 participants last year. The counts are sponsored by the National Audubon Society and the complete results are published in the July issue of American Birds. Copies of this issue are available for \$7.50 from American Birds, 950 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

Each Christmas Bird Count is a day-long census, conducted near Christmas Day, of all birds found within a circular area fifteen miles in diameter. The count is undoubtedly the biggest birding event of the year. Some groups spend weeks scouting their areas, hoping for the biggest possible list of birds in their designated area. There is as well rivalry between different count circles, but in Massachusetts the Cape Cod Count seems to come out on top every year.

There is no limit to the number of participants and compilers attempt to field as many competent birders as they can to cover the roughly 177 square miles of a count circle.

Last year in Massachusetts a total of 177 species plus two additional subspecies (Bullock's Oriole and Ipswich Sparrow) were recorded on the twenty-four counts within the state. An additional six species were observed during the count period but not recorded on any count. Those species were: Great Egret on Cape Cod; Snow Goose on Martha's Vineyard; Common Moorhen, Saw-whet Owl and Western Kingbird on Nantucket and Bohemian Waxwing in Newburyport.

If you would like to participate in this year's counts you should contact the compilers for more information. The compilers and counts of eastern Massachusetts are listed below.

Athol	Robert Coyle	1978 Chestnut Hill Ave, Athol, MA 01331
Buzzards Bay	Richard Harlow	Box 244, Marion, MA 02738
Cape Ann	John Nove	Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, MA 01970
Cape Cod	Blair Nikula	23 Atwood Lane, Chatham, MA 02633
Concord	Peter Alden	103 Bartlett Ave, Ar- lington, MA 02174
Greater Boston	Robert Stymeist	358 Tappan St, Brook- line, MA 02146
Marshfield	Warren Harrington	Box 1114, N. Marshfield, MA 02059

Martha's Vineyard	Gus Ben David	Box 1055, Oak Bluffs, MA 02557
Mid Cape Cod	Janet Aylward	91 Wharf Lane, Yarmouth- port, MA 02675
Millis	John Marshall	45 West St, Dedham, MA 02026
Nantucket	Edith Andrews	Box 1182, Nantucket, MA 02554
New Bedford	Jo Fernandez	736 Horseneck Rd, S. Dartmouth, MA 02748
Newburyport	Richard Heil	12 Audette St, Peabody, MA 01960
Plymouth	Trevor Lloyd-Evans	Manomet Bird Observa- tory, Manomet, MA 02345
Quincy	Sib Higginbotham	935 S. Central Ave, Wollaston, MA 02170
Taunton-Middleboro	Thomas Athearn	41 Donnelly St, Fall River, MA 02723
Wilmington	Mark Wilson	16 Revere Rd, Tewks- bury, MA 01876
Worcester	Fran McMenemy	35 Laurier St, Worces- ter, MA 01603

SUMMARY OF HIGHEST COUNTS OF INDIVIDUALS
RECORDED FOR MASSACHUSETTS CHRISTMAS COUNTS, 1981

compiled by Robert H. Stymeist, Brookline

As mentioned earlier a total of 177 species were recorded on last year's Massachusetts Christmas Bird Counts. National high counts were recorded for the following: Black Duck, Oldsquaw, Common Eider, Great Black-backed Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Hairy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee and Yellow-breasted Chat. The five Lesser Black-backed Gulls on Nantucket were an all time high for a Christmas Bird Count. The following abbreviations are used: BB - Buzzards Bay; CA - Cape Ann; CC - Cape Cod; Con - Concord; Bos - Greater Boston; Green - Greenfield; Marsh - Marshfield; MV - Martha's Vineyard; MidC - Mid Cape Cod; Nan - Nantucket; N.B. - N.Berkshire; Newbt - Newburyport; Nhpt - Northampton; Q - Quincy; Spring - Springfield; Tuck - Tucker-nuck Island; Worc - Worcester.

Common Loon 170 (MV); Red-throated Loon 178 (Nan); Western Grebe 1 (Nan); Red-necked Grebe 30 (Nan); Horned Grebe 61 (BB); Pied-billed Grebe 12 (CC); Northern Gannet 120 (CC); Great Cormorant 263 (Q); Double-crested Cormorant 9 (Q); Great Blue Heron 69 (CC); Snowy Egret 1 (Nan); Black-crowned Night-Heron 28 (CC); American Bittern 1 (CC, MV); Mute Swan 117 (MV); Tundra Swan 3 (MV); Canada Goose 3344 (Newbt); Brant 790 (CC); Mallard 1178 (Bos); American Black Duck 6925 (Newbt); Gadwall 18 (MidC); Pintail 60 (MidC); Green-winged Teal 184 (Nan); Eurasian Wigeon 1 (Nan); American Wigeon 69 (MV); Northern Shoveler 6 (Newbt); Wood Duck 10 (MV);

Redhead 130 (BB); Ring-necked Duck 120 (BB); Canvasback 269 (BB); Greater Scaup 3388 (BB); Lesser Scaup 79 (MV); Common Goldeneye 1489 (MV); Barrow's Goldeneye 7 (Q); Bufflehead 2319 (BB); Oldsquaw 8204 (Nan); Harlequin Duck 6 (MV); Common Eider 14,020 (CC); King Eider 4 (Q); White-winged Scoter 1771 (BB); Surf Scoter 2076 (BB); Black Scoter 610 (Nan); Ruddy Duck 51 (Bos); Hooded Merganser 125 (BB); Common Merganser 252 (MidC); Red-breasted Merganser 5413 (Nan); Northern Goshawk 4 (Newbt); Sharp-shinned Hawk 16 (CC); Cooper's Hawk 1 (CC, BB, MV, Newbt); Red-tailed Hawk 45 (MV); Red-shouldered Hawk 2 (CA); Rough-legged Hawk 10 (Newbt); Bald Eagle 1 (CC, Green, Newbt); Northern Harrier 54 (Nan); Peregrine Falcon 2 (CC); Gyrfalcon 1 (Nhpt); Merlin 5 (MV); American Kestrel 23 (Bos); Ruffed Grouse 51 (Millis); Bobwhite 153 (CC); Ring-necked Pheasant 190 (Con); Turkey 9 (Green); Virginia Rail 7 (Nan); Sora 1 (CC); American Coot 38 (BB); Killdeer 6 (MV); Black-bellied Plover 20 (Bos); Ruddy Turnstone 1 (CC); American Woodcock 6 (MidC); Common Snipe 8 (BB); Greater Yellowlegs 3 (CC); Red Knot 42 (Marsh); Purple Sandpiper 300 (Q); Dunlin 625 (CC); Sanderling 123 (MidC, Nan); Pomarine Jaeger 1 (CC); Glaucous Gull 11 (Nan); Iceland Gull 53 (Nan); Great Black-backed Gull 6462 (Nan); Lesser Black-backed Gull 5 (Nan); Herring Gull 46,078 (Nan); Ring-billed Gull 1572 (Bos); Black-headed Gull 4 (Bos); Bonaparte's Gull 1256 (Nan); Little Gull 1 (Bos); Black-legged Kittiwake 13,650 (Nan); Common Tern 1 (MidC); Razorbill 13 (Nan); Thick-billed Murre 1 (CC, Nan); Black Guillemot 22 (CC); Rock Dove 1867 (Bos); Mourning Dove 1669 (Nhpt); Barn Owl 3 (MV); Screech Owl 39 (Millis, Nhpt); Great Horned Owl 16 (Nhpt); Snowy Owl 2 (Newbt); Barred Owl 4 (Con); Long-eared Owl 2 (CA); Short-eared Owl 8 (Q); Belted Kingfisher 21 (CC); Common Flicker 138 (Nan); Pileated Woodpecker 5 (Spring); Red-bellied Woodpecker 1 (CA, N.B., Spring); Red-headed Woodpecker 2 (MV); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1 (CC); Hairy Woodpecker 151 (Con); Downy Woodpecker 399 (Con); Horned Lark 407 (CC); Blue Jay 751 (CA); Common Crow 3048 (Con); Fish Crow 58 (Con); Black-capped Chickadee 2407 (Con); Boreal Chickadee 3 (Worc); Tufted Titmouse 505 (Con); White-breasted Nuthatch 298 (Con); Red-breasted Nuthatch 156 (Spring); Brown Creeper 47 (Spring); Winter Wren 3 (Spring); Carolina Wren 17 (BB); Marsh Wren 2 (CC, Nan); Mockingbird 224 (Con); Gray Catbird 8 (MV); Brown Thrasher 7 (CC); American Robin 458 (Nan); Varied Thrush 1 (Con, Nhpt); Hermit Thrush 5 (BB); Eastern Bluebird 7 (MV); Townsend's Solitaire 1 (MV); Golden-crowned Kinglet 57 (BB); Ruby-crowned Kinglet 8 (CC); Water Pipit 12 (Nan); Cedar Waxwing 372 (CC); Northern Shrike 1 (7 counts); Starling 130,000 (Q); Orange-crowned Warbler 7 (CC); Nashville Warbler 1 (Bos); Yellow-rumped Warbler 3369 (Nan); Pine Warbler 5 (CC); Prairie Warbler 1 (CC); Palm Warbler 13 (CC); Common Yellowthroat 2 (CC, MV, Tuck); Yellow-breasted Chat 4 (CC); House Sparrow 1712 (Con); Eastern Meadowlark 43 (Nan); Redwinged Blackbird 62 (MidC); Northern Oriole 2 (CC); "Bullock's" Oriole 1 (BB, CA); Rusty Blackbird 6 (BB); Common Grackle 1644 (MV); Brown-headed Cowbird 77 (Worc); Cardinal 386 (Con); Dickcissel 1

(BB); Evening Grosbeak 711 (Nhpt); Purple Finch 162 (Con); House Finch 596 (Nhpt); Pine Grosbeak 97 (Nhpt); Common Redpoll 259 (Nhpt); Pine Siskin 371 (Nhpt); American Goldfinch 710 (Con); Red Crossbill 30 (Nan); White-winged Crossbill 95 (Spring); Rufous-sided Towhee 18 (MV); Savannah Sparrow 18 (MV); "Ipswich" Sparrow 16 (Tuck); Grasshopper Sparrow 1 (Nan); Sharp-tailed Sparrow 6 (Marsh); Seaside Sparrow 1 (Marsh); Vesper Sparrow 1 (Bos, Spring); Dark-eyed Junco 1273 (Con); Tree Sparrow 1103 (Nhpt); Chipping Sparrow 6 (Nan); Field Sparrow 74 (BB); White-crowned Sparrow 3 (Nan); White-throated Sparrow 265 (CC); Fox Sparrow 8 (CC); Lincoln's Sparrow 1 (CC, Taunton); Swamp Sparrow 47 (CC); Song Sparrow 255 (Nhpt); Lapland Longspur 60 (CC); Snow Bunting 116 (CC, Nan).

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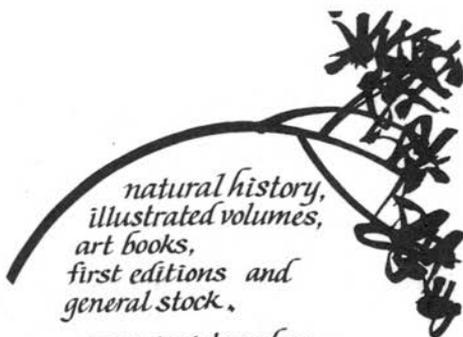


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