

2016 Maryland Mid-winter Bird Count

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The annual Maryland Mid-winter Bird Count was held on several weekend days between mid-January and early February 2016. Results were submitted for Frederick, Carroll, Howard, Baltimore, Harford, and Kent Counties, as well as the Fred J. Archibald Audubon Sanctuary and Audrey Carroll Audubon Sanctuary. No results were submitted for the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal.

The weather in January and February for the mid-Maryland area consisted of temperatures ranging from lows of 18-37 °F (-7.8 to 2.8 °C) overnight and highs of 40-52 °F (4.4-11.1 °C) during the day. Several locations had partially cloudy skies, scattered light fog, and occasional drizzle. Harford and Frederick counties reported areas of snow-covered ground.

Table 1. 2016 Maryland Mid-winter Count: participating counts, count codes, dates, and compilers. Counts are listed west to east.

Count	Count Code	Date	Compiler
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal	C&O	23 JAN 2016	Zach Slavin
Fred J. Archibald Audubon Sanctuary	FAAS	8 JAN 2016	David Smith
Audrey Carroll Audubon Sanctuary	ACAS	9 JAN 2016	David Smith
Frederick	FR	31 JAN 2016	David Smith
Carroll	CA	17 JAN 2016	Don Jewell
Howard	HO	6 FEB 2016	Joe Hanfman
Baltimore	BA	23 JAN 2016	Pete Webb
Harford	HA	9 JAN 2016	Rick Cheicante
Kent	KE	7 FEB 2016	Walter Ellison

A total of 151 field observers comprising 90 parties reported 117 species for a total of 131,883 birds. The observers spent 283.7 hours on foot covering 198.13 miles. Throughout the eight days, the observers also spent 169 hours traveling 1976 miles by car. Five groups spent over 10 hours owling and a total of 14.05 hours was spent feeder watching.

Table 2. 2016 Maryland Mid-winter Count: summary. (No results were submitted for C&O.)

	C&O	FAAS	ACAS	FR	CA	HO	BA	HA	KE
Total Species	42	41	82	76	87	88	74	81	
Total Birds	726	434	23,160	16,238	24,812	9764	4643	52,106	
Start Time	0600			0645	0535	0745		0700	
Stop Time	1245			2100	1145	1645		1800	
Parties	1	1	12	11	46	11	6	2	
Number of People	2	4	31	19	61	20	8	6	
Hours Driving			71.28	28	49.9		11.5	8	
Miles Driving			839	379.1	527.6	31	107.7	92	
Hours Walking	5.5	6.75	26	40.85	140.9	22.7	32.5	8.5	
Miles Walking		2	12.28	29.5	124.2	16.4	5.75	8	
Hours Owling		0.5	2.5	1.5	3.8		1.75		
Miles Owling			37		8.7				
Feeder Hours			1	6.75	3.8	0.25	2.25		
Hours Stationary				0.5	4.7				
				(hawking)					

As expected at this time of year, 24 species of waterfowl were observed with the largest number by far being Canada Geese at 32,942 followed by Snow Geese at 12,417. Also recorded were 3834 Ruddy Ducks and 486 Tundra Swans. Three Cackling Geese and 1 Red-throated Loon were spotted in the Back River Peninsula area of Baltimore County.

Six species of gulls were observed with the most notable being 54 Bonaparte’s Gulls, 1 Iceland Gull, and 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls (2 at the Eastern Sanitary Landfill, a gull magnet located in Baltimore County, and 1 in Kent County).

In Frederick County, the 2.5 hours and 37 miles of owling produced 7 Eastern Screech-Owls, 6 Great Horned Owls and 2 Barred Owls. Howard County produced 2 Eastern Screech-Owls, 10 Great Horned Owls, and 6 Barred Owls. Six counts recorded all seven woodpecker species. Frederick County recorded a first for their mid-winter count when a Loggerhead Shrike was observed.

Several counties had single bird sightings of several species including a Virginia Rail in Baltimore County and a Short-eared Owl in Carroll County. A Black-capped Chickadee was recorded in Frederick County, while a Northern Saw-whet Owl, a Boat-tailed Grackle, and an Evening Grosbeak were recorded in Howard County.

Table 3. 2016 Maryland Mid-winter Count: observed species. (No results were submitted for C&O.)

Species	C&O	FAAS	ACAS	FR	CA	HO	BA	HA	KE
Snow Goose				1				4	12,412
Cackling Goose						1	3		
Canada Goose		4	65	3068	2758	7021	1005	1086	17,935
Mute Swan				1					
Tundra Swan				22	2			69	393
Wood Duck									2
Gadwall					61		39		28
American Wigeon					1	3	6		
American Black Duck				182	26	12	13	113	30
Mallard		3		853	170	305	163	34	189
Northern Shoveler				1			82		6
Northern Pintail						2			33
Green-winged Teal				2	4				
Canvasback				1	2	1	100		
Redhead							2		
Ring-necked Duck				12	246	69	18	3	63
Greater Scaup									1
Lesser Scaup				2			112		71
scaup sp.									3000
Bufflehead				2	26	7	163		237
Common Goldeneye				12				20	205
Hooded Merganser					27	32	15	23	7
Common Merganser				40	45	148	44	61	243
Red-breasted Merganser							26	3	13
Ruddy Duck					31	3	3741		59
Wild Turkey		2	3	29	35	32		23	
Red-throated Loon							1		
Common Loon					2		1		1
Pied-billed Grebe					12		3		2
Double-crested Cormorant						1	35		
Great Blue Heron				9	6	9	5	14	21
Black Vulture				136	78	229	48	22	37
Turkey Vulture				236	311	248	40	38	186
Bald Eagle				5	20	28	8	31	39
Northern Harrier				6	1		6	10	4
Sharp-shinned Hawk		1		4		4		3	2
Cooper's Hawk				19	10	15	3	2	1
Red-shouldered Hawk				37	12	84	9	11	5
Red-tailed Hawk		1	1	107	56	56	11	11	16
buteo sp.						1			
Virginia Rail								1	
American Coot					11	1	16		
Killdeer				9		2	2		

Species	C&O	FAAS	ACAS	FR	CA	HO	BA	HA	KE
Wilson's Snipe				4		8	1		
American Woodcock					1	5			
Bonaparte's Gull							54		
Ring-billed Gull				11	147	286	1358	61	613
Herring Gull							353	18	190
Iceland Gull							1		
Lesser Black-backed Gull							2		1
Great Black-backed Gull							62		24
gull sp.				2		23	23		
Rock Pigeon				699	342	116	152	22	
Mourning Dove	2	3	541	335	390	30	77		85
Eastern Screech-Owl				7	1	2			
Great Horned Owl				1	6	1		3	2
Barred Owl	1	1	2	1	6			1	5
Short-eared Owl					1				
Northern Saw-whet Owl						1			
Belted Kingfisher			1	18	10	5	1	1	1
Red-headed Woodpecker	1			3	3	2	2	1	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	14	12	185	91	220	23	31		33
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4	3	34	11	21	2	12		1
Downy Woodpecker	19	9	143	60	168	24	25		26
Hairy Woodpecker	4	4	21	22	29	1	8		3
Northern Flicker	10	7	114	30	94	8	22		36
Pileated Woodpecker	4	2	47	13	40	5	13		2
American Kestrel			26	9	8	1	1		2
Merlin					1				1
Loggerhead Shrike			1						
Blue Jay	24	5	298	95	470	66	80		111
American Crow	8	22	646	1043	958	54	80		32
Fish Crow			39	34	183	65	2		
crow sp.			151		805	26			
Common Raven	1		8	3	1	3			
Horned Lark			579	51	74	4	3		15
Carolina Chickadee	54	14	410	219	421	50	79		51
Black-capped Chickadee			1						
Tufted Titmouse	47	11	278	133	421	51	35		33
White-breasted Nuthatch	20	5	137	91	178	39	24		4
Brown-headed Nuthatch									4
Brown Creeper	2	1	10	8	3				2
Winter Wren		2	4	3	6	4	1		
Carolina Wren	14	13	234	95	220	27	22		38
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	3	19	11	22		3		13
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		1	4		1		1		5
Eastern Bluebird	19	2	210	145	360	10	14		24
Hermit Thrush	1		4	10		2	9		2
American Robin	90	3	2088	1183		123	285		962
Gray Catbird				2					1

Species	C&O	FAAS	ACAS	FR	CA	HO	BA	HA	KE
Brown Thrasher						1		1	5
Northern Mockingbird	11	6	175	55	121	25	23		25
European Starling	31	7	5305	2126	2325	370	357		1131
American Pipit		1	2				10		
Cedar Waxwing	85	22	89	67	21				277
Pine Warbler								1	
Yellow-rumped Warbler			37				24	13	51
Eastern Towhee		3	17	24	32	5	25		65
American Tree Sparrow	3	1	3	2	6	6	12		
Chipping Sparrow	6				6	2	9		
Field Sparrow	6	4	21	3	56	3	4		27
Savannah Sparrow			53		300	1	15		
Fox Sparrow			4	6	9	9	4		3
Song Sparrow	12	19	360	95	313	43	83		134
Swamp Sparrow	1	2	2	2	10	4	3		9
White-throated Sparrow	34	81	1404	485	959	246	433		840
White-crowned Sparrow			45		30	3	8		7
Dark-eyed Junco	54	20	1491	500	1195	157	289		311
Northern Cardinal	42	21	733	206	693	109	105		132
Red-winged Blackbird	65	1	155	80	1114	228	270		1032
Eastern Meadowlark			14		1	1	16		
Rusty Blackbird							4	5	
Common Grackle				4001	134	39	215		10,273
Brown-headed Cowbird			60	4	211		129		71
Baltimore Oriole					1				
blackbird sp.			300		8				
House Finch	14	11	308	98	371	24	27		25
Purple Finch		2	2		3	2	1		
Pine Siskin			3		33		1		
American Goldfinch	7	39	134	114	259	17	45		29
Evening Grosbeak					1				
House Sparrow	1		690	213	258	79	36		65

This has been my first experience with gathering and compiling the Mid-winter count data. I hope the readers will find the information interesting and informative. Thank you to all the observers and compilers for their time and effort. I look forward to next year’s count. – Mary Anne.

Editor’s Note: The Audubon Society of the District of Columbia (DC Audubon Society) ran the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Mid-winter Count annually through 2016, but will be focusing on activities within the DC boundaries henceforth. If an individual or group is interested in organizing future C & O Canal Mid-Winter Counts, the DC Audubon Society would be happy to share historical information on organizing and running the count. The DC Audubon Society can be reached at dcaudubonsociety@gmail.com.