

EAGLE RIVER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2019

Although the west wind increased the windchill on Saturday, December 14, most of the day was brightened by sunshine which, after the cloudy & extremely wet fall we had, was very welcome. There was about 6" of snow on the ground and the morning temperature was -20 C which was colder than the -8 C that we had last year. Despite the colder temperatures, many feeders had few birds. The cone crop this year has been rated as a bumper crop and birds seem to be taking advantage of the wild seed. Several feeder watchers reported birds eating seeds on trees in their yards while ignoring the seed at the feeders. If these flocks had not shown up, the total would have been below 1000.

While the total number of birds (1,130) was 250 less than last year, the number of species increased significantly. On count day, 26 species were recorded with an additional four on count week for a total of 30. In 2018, we had only 24 species total.

Note that only one Pine Grosbeak was seen in the entire count circle and most of the pigeons must have been at the Dryden mill. Perhaps the rail strike reduced the amount of grain on the tracks. A feeder near Minnitaki attracted a Western Meadowlark, 3 Red-winged Blackbirds, and the only starlings. These birds may be sheltering in a neighbour's barn, but they are dining out at feeders. Boreal Chickadees visited a feeder in Eton Rugby, and the only grackle was seen 1 kilometre south of there. The only American Goldfinch showed up near Eagle River while four feeder watchers had larger flocks of Pine Siskins drop into their yards. We got a high count of Purple Finches this year as well and all of them were seen close to Eagle Lake. The Mourning Dove put in several appearances during the count week and was last seen Dec. 23 which is a new late date for our area. The following birds were seen during this year's count:

Ruffed Grouse	18	Black-capped Chickadee	141
Sharp-tailed Grouse	15	Boreal Chickadee	4
Bald Eagle	11	European Starling	5
Rock Pigeon	CW	Red-breasted Nuthatch	30
Mourning Dove	CW	Dark-eyed Junco	25
Barred Owl	CW	Red-winged Blackbird	3
Raven	174	Meadowlark – Western	1
Crow	7	Common Grackle	1
Magpie	36	Pine Grosbeak	1
Pileated Woodpecker	10	Purple Finch (high count)	33
Hairy Woodpecker	38	Common Redpoll	64
Downy Woodpecker	25	Pine Siskin	112
Black-backed Woodpecker	CW	American Goldfinch	35
Canada Jay	67	Evening Grosbeak	123
Blue Jay	79	House Sparrow	72

Total Individual Birds: 1,038
Total Species on Count Day: 26
Species Only During Count Week: 4

Carolle Eady, Compiler

Ignace Christmas Bird Count held on January 2 2020

Good numbers of Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins but no Pine Grosbeaks for the first time ever.

Ruffed Grouse	13	Red-breasted Nuthatch	18
Rock Pigeon	44	European Starling	4
Downy Woodpecker	6	Dark-eyed Junco	18
Hairy Woodpecker	4	Common Grackle	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1	Purple Finch	25
Gray Jay	5	Common Redpoll	250
Blue Jay	33	Pine Siskin	254
Common Raven	103	American Goldfinch	7
Black-capped Chickadee	58	Evening Grosbeak	17
Boreal Chickadee	2		

Total Individuals 863

Total Species 19

Marathon CBC 2019

Marathon's 42nd CBC was held this month on Sunday December 15. There were 34 species observed on count day and a Red-winged Blackbird made an appearance at a feeder a day later bringing the total up to **35 species** for this year. This is higher than expected (avg. of 26 species observed on all previous CBC's in Marathon). The total individuals were 1293 which was again higher than our previous counts (avg. 1068 individuals), but maybe a reflection of slightly higher effort this year; we had 8 field teams and 2 feeder watchers, for a total of 17 people participating in this year's count. The groups covered 40 km by foot/snowshoe and 144 by car. Total birding of 37 party hours braving -25 to -12 C temps throughout the day. Unusual this year, a few of us noted, was that most birds were observed in the forest rather than at feeders in town, the latter having been pretty quiet this fall & winter from most accounts I've heard.

High counts were observed for Downy Woodpecker (42 individuals, beating the record of 40 from 2004) and Pileated Woodpecker (6 observed, beating the record of 4 from 2010 & 12). We had a low count of Herring Gull (10 individuals), but we think this was an artefact of missing them count day rather than a reflection of low population numbers this year. Unfortunately missing them also meant we missed out on a Glaucous Gull, one or two who are usually spotted amongst the Herring Gulls. We also couldn't turn up either of the grouse species this year – perhaps not surprising given Brian Ratcliff's winter bird list where they have also been late to show up (if at all yet?).

We all enjoyed warming up & sharing stories of our day over a chilli supper afterwards; a lynx sighting was a highlight for one lucky group for the day. Thanks again to our long-distance migrants who made the long trek here – Nick Escott and Stan Phippen. Their contributions really helped with circle coverage and getting our tally up for the day!

The entire results are copied below for those interested.

Good birding to all in 2020,
Christine Drake

Common Goldeneye	5	American Robin	22
Common Merganser	1	Cedar Waxwing	168
Bald Eagle	2	Northern Shrike	1
Northern Goshawk	1	European Starling	18
Herring Gull	10	American Tree Sparrow	3
Rock Pigeon	1	Song Sparrow	2
Downy Woodpecker	42	Dark-eyed Junco	13
Hairy Woodpecker	9	Snow Bunting	4
Black-backed Woodpecker	1	Red-winged Blackbird	CW1
Pileated Woodpecker	6	Pine Grosbeak	16
Gray Jay	15	Purple Finch	5
Blue Jay	11	Red Crossbill	1
American Crow	57	White-winged Crossbill	84
Common Raven	223	Common Redpoll	97

Black-capped Chickadee	95	Pine Siskin	221
Boreal Chickadee	9	American Goldfinch	71
Red-breasted Nuthatch	50	Evening Grosbeak	26
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3		

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT DAY 34

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT WEEK 35

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS COUNT DAY 1293