

CHIPPEWA VALLEY AUDUBON CLUB  
**Christmas Bird Count Report**  
**2004**

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Chippewa Valley Audubon Club Christmas Bird Count was held on Sunday, Dec. 19, from 8:00 a.m. - 5 p.m., with a few groups also owling before daylight.

The sky was clear; it was windy and bitterly cold. Temperatures ranged from a low of 1<sup>o</sup> below zero to a high of 8<sup>o</sup> above. Winds were from the north northwest, 15 mph, gusting to 29 mph, dropping wind chills to as much as 35<sup>o</sup> below zero. There was a snow cover of about two inches. Moving water was mostly open. Most still water was frozen, but most of Lake Isabella and Coldwater Lake were open.

Despite the frigid conditions, there were 32 Chippewa Valley Audubon Club members and friends in the field and six feeder watchers. 52 species (plus 1 Red-winged Blackbird, during count week) were observed, the lowest number of species since 1992. A total of 9,338 birds was the lowest since 2000. These low numbers were likely due to many birds not moving because of the weather conditions, and due to a smaller than normal number of observers.

No new species were observed, so our total remains 119 species in 52 years. Birds not normally seen on the Christmas Bird Count included a Carolina Wren (6<sup>th</sup> sighting) seen by Jean Murray's Town team, Eastern Bluebird (11<sup>th</sup> sighting) and White-throated Sparrow (13<sup>th</sup> sighting). Two Red-headed Woodpeckers (seen by feeder watcher Ken Walker) were reported for the third straight year. Canada Goose numbers, while still high, were substantially lower than last year. 7 American Kestrels represented less than half the 52 year average of 15. Bald Eagle has only been seen on 11 counts and the 10 reported this year represent almost a third of those reported in 52 years. 54 Red-tailed Hawks were also a significant increase over the average of 12. Northern Cardinal numbers appear to be continuing to rise. A couple of irruptive species putting in an appearance this year were Red-breasted Nuthatch (22) and Common Redpoll (30).

The complete list of species observed (numbers in parentheses) is: Canada Goose (2519), House Sparrow (1042), Rock Pigeon (792), European Starling (551), Mallard (501), American Crow (439), Mourning Dove (406), Wild Turkey (366), House Finch (356), American Goldfinch (354), Snow Bunting (330), Black-capped Chickadee (299), Dark-eyed Junco (196), Northern Cardinal (180), Horned Lark (173), American Tree Sparrow (135), Blue Jay (109), Downy Woodpecker (70), Tufted Titmouse (58), Red-tailed Hawk (54), Ring-necked Pheasant (51), American Robin (46), White-breasted Nuthatch (35), Red-bellied Woodpecker (33), Common Redpoll (30), Purple Finch (24), Hairy Woodpecker (23), Red-breasted Nuthatch (22), Cedar Waxwing (21), Common Merganser (19), Common Goldeneye (19), American Black Duck (10), Bald Eagle (10), Mute Swan (8), American Kestrel (7), Eastern Bluebird (6), Cooper's Hawk (6), White-throated Sparrow (6), Pileated Woodpecker (5), Rough-legged Hawk (5), Belted Kingfisher (3), Barred Owl (3), Northern Flicker (2), Brown Creeper (2), Ruffed Grouse (2), Ring-billed Gull (2), Eastern Screech Owl (2), Red-headed Woodpecker (2), Sharp-shinned Hawk (1), Song Sparrow (1), Great Horned Owl (1), Carolina Wren (1).

Field observers were: Betty Assman, Dan Bettendorf, Walt Bissard, Joanne Church, Bill Collins, Larry Collins, Bob Connell, Elaine Connell, Joanne Dannenhoffer, Jim Dealing, Dick Dietrich, Frances Dietrich, George Gibb, John Grossa, Mic Hamas, Tom Kaczynski, Ann Keenan, Hud Keenan, Carole Keene, Charles Keene, Gary Kramer, Stan Lilley, Cil Lorand, John Lorand, John Mitchell, Jean Murray, Dennis Olson, Everett Schafer, Michael Sherman, Sherrie Start, Scott Terry, and John Uhlmann.

Feeder watchers were: Betty Assman, Kathy Bland, Pat & Bill Farley, Barb Kirchner, Bruce & Yvonne Miller, and Ken Walker.

Thanks again this year to Bob and Elaine Connell for hosting the post-Count tally and for taking reports from all of the feeder watchers.

This year's "Ducky" award went to Jim Dealing, for failing to observe a single Starling!

Local results will be published in the National Audubon Society's *American Birds* and in the Michigan Audubon Society's *Michigan Birds and Natural History*. Bird count data is available at <http://www.birdsource.org> with count code (MIMP).

Mark your calendars. The 2005 Christmas Bird Count will be Sunday, December 18th.