

Hi Birders,

Despite single digit temperatures and stiff winds, 43 Field Counters and 8 Feeder Counters participated in the 29th Matanuska Valley Audubon Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 16th! The cold stiff winds suppressed much of the anticipated bird activity and despite the run of warm weather that ended a few days before Count Day, the short burst of cold weather was enough to freeze up just about all of the open water in Valley streams.

With a few notable exceptions, counts for most species were lower than expected but new highs were set for four species, Bald Eagle, Northern Flicker, American Robin, and Bohemian Waxwing. Thirty-one species were observed on Count Day and an additional species, Ruffed Grouse, was seen during Count Week.

Despite the expectation of a high hawk count due to the lack of snow cover for Arctic Hares, the snowfall just before our Count and the cold and wind on Count Day ended those hopes. Four Northern Goshawks, an immature Northern Harrier, a Sharp-shinned Hawk and surprisingly, two juvenile Rough-legged Hawks, were the only raptors seen except for Bald Eagles, which were out in force with a total of 36 adults and 2 juveniles seen during the day, six more than our previous B. Eagle high count of 32. 12 of the adult B. Eagles were found at the Palmer Landfill.

After last year's high U.S. count of 80 American Dippers, we were hoping for another good Dipper day. However, despite Dan Crowson's Iron Man trudging along the 8.5 miles of snow and ice covered shoreline of the Little Su River, only about half of the expected Dippers were found and our other Field Counters fared no better. Dan did find three unexpected C. Mergansers on the Little Su.

Other unexpected finds was the immature N. Harrier found along the Matanuska River by Ralph Hulbert's team, the Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker that's been camped out at the feeders at Doug and Ruth Ann Lloyd's

home for the last several days, and a lone American Tree Sparrow found with a small flock of C. Redpolls by the Gaiser family team at a Lazy Mountain home picking up seeds from below a feeder.

Our Bohemian Waxwing count jumped from 2,311 to 3,169. The increasing number of subdivisions in the Valley, many with mature fruit trees, is probably a factor in the Waxwing increase and we also expect those trees to gradually increase the number of A. Robins staying throughout the winter.

Unlike the last several years, no exotics (R.N. Pheasants, N. Bobwhite, etc.) were found and our E. Starling count was way down at only 94 birds, from a high of 275.

A big thanks to all who helped in this Count, and especially to Maggie and Dan Crowson, who again graciously hosted our post-Count wrap-up and potluck meeting and tall story session.

A listing of species and count totals for our 2007 CBC is attached as a .pdf file.

Happy Holidays to all of you!!!

Best regards,
Bob Winckler
Compiler, Matanuska Valley CBC

**MAT-SU BIRDERS
2007 MATANUSKA VALLEY
AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
FINAL TALLY**

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Mallard	657	
Common Merganser	4	
Ruffed Grouse	--	Seen during Count Week
Spruce Grouse	3	
Bald Eagle	38	New high - previous: 32
Northern Harrier	1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	
Northern Goshawk	4	
Rough-legged Hawk	2	New high - previous: 1
Rock Pigeon	180	
Great Horned Owl	1	
Downy Woodpecker	26	
Hairy Woodpecker	22	
American Three-toed Woodpecker	1	
Northern Flicker(YS)	1	1st time seen on Count Day
Northern Shrike	3	
Gray Jay	5	
Black-billed Magpie	168	
Common Raven	584	
Black-capped Chickadee	656	
Boreal Chickadee	26	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	41	
Brown Creeper	7	
American Dipper	36	
American Robin	3	
European Starling	94	
Bohemian Waxwing	3,169	New high - previous: 2,311
American Tree Sparrow	1	
Dark-eyed Junco	11	
Pine Grosbeak	102	
Common Redpoll	1,334	
Hoary Redpoll	1	
Pine Siskin	5	
TOTAL BIRDS--7,187 / TOTAL SPECIES SEEN COUNT DAY -- 32		