**The 2013 Lewisburg Christmas Bird Count**



Merlin by Matt Levanowitz, photographed near Montandon during the count

This was a \*\*\*\*\*\*snowy\*\*\*\*\*\* year, as our count circle received 5 – 8 inches during the afternoon and evening prior to count day. In spite of uncertain roads, 44 brave participants got outdoors and produced a fine team effort. Most roads were in acceptable condition after early morning, but roadside parking was severely limited. Not all of us were able to walk in our favorite spots, yet several participants remarked that they enjoyed Christmas counting in conditions that were “different.”

The 68 reported species is higher than might be expected under the conditions, and we had a very nice collection of exceptional birds. It was the year of the Merlin, a species never found on our count prior to 2001. We had three – one seen by Matt Levanowitz, one by the Schweinsbergs, and one by Robert Hazard and Dianne Muchant.

And two catbirds! And four sapsuckers! Our first Snow Geese in twelve years. Both vultures, Fox Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, *one* pheasant, *one* robin. Perhaps the best bird of all was only heard, not seen. Nick Block enticed a Northern Saw-whet Owl to respond to a recording for his first bird of the day. This is only the 5th occurrence of a saw-whet in our 64-year history.

Surprisingly, we set or tied 13 high count records. These were for Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk (tie), Merlin, Herring Gull, Saw-whet Owl (tie), Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Gray Catbird (tie), Song Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco.

Fourteen eagles! – what a wonderful development. Certainly, some of these may have been duplicates. Large, high-flying birds can easily be seen by more than one party (geese is the obvious example), but, whatever the exact number, Bald Eagles continue to increase.

A Snow Bunting was reported on December 16 by Brent Bacon, allowing us to denote that species as a “count week” species.

Chickadee numbers were exceptionally low, as they were two years ago. Thirteen of our 68 species were reported by only one party. Birds that we missed entirely included Ruffed Grouse, Rough-legged Hawk, Fish Crow, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, Field Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Pine Siskin.

Our 45 participants included: Warren Abrahamson, Mark & Sarah Berryman, Nicholas Block, Steve Anderson, Caroline Campagna, Roy Fontaine, Warren Frantz, Kerry Givens, Geoff Goodenow, Allan & Ann Grundstrom, Bob Gutheinz, Robert Hazard, David Hafer, Rolf & Annick Helbig, John Holback, Galen & Bonnie Ingram, Jill Largent, Jim & Diane Lengle, Matt Levanowitz, Jack McCann, Wayne McDiffett, Larry McGraw, Bill Malone, Debby Meade, Than Mitchell, Mike Molesevich, Dianne Muchant, Judy Peeler, Robert Reyda, Thom Rippon, Allen & Joanne Schweinsberg, Carl Shaffer, Joe & Emily & Luke Southerton, Logan Stenger, Stephanie Thomas, Don Ulrich, Tom Yannaccone. Please come back next year!

It is very satisfying to be part of this considerable community of folks who share an enthusuasm for the Christmas Count tradition.

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| The results:  Snow Goose 200  Canada Goose 2121 |
| Wood Duck 2 |
| American Black Duck 7 |
| Mallard 427 |
| Bufflehead 2 |
| Common Merganser 115 |
| Ring-necked Pheasant 1 |
| Wild Turkey 18 |
| Great Blue Heron 15  Black Vulture 22  Turkey Vulture 1 |
| Bald Eagle 14 |
| Northern Harrier 9 |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk 7 |
| Cooper’s Hawk 11 |
| *Accipiter sp. 2* |
| Red-shouldered Hawk 2 |
| Red-tailed Hawk 123 |
| American Kestrel 61  Merlin 3 |
| Killdeer 6 |
| Wilson's Snipe 13 |
| Ring-billed Gull 61 |
| Herring Gull 60 |
| Rock Pigeon 1079 |
| Mourning Dove 1520 |
| Barn Owl 3 |
| Screech Owl 5 |
| Great Horned Owl 5  Snowy Owl (1 count week)  Barred Owl 1  Saw-whet Owl 1 |
| Belted Kingfisher 11 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker 78  Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 4 |
| Downy Woodpecker 100 |
| Hairy Woodpecker 9 |
| Northern Flicker 6 |
| Pileated Woodpecker 19 |
| Blue Jay 229 |
| American Crow 612 |
| Common Raven 13 |
| Horned Lark 935 |
| Black-capped Chickadee 118 |
| Tufted Titmouse 200 |
| White-breasted Nuthatch 78 |
| Brown Creeper 7 |
| Carolina Wren 80 |
| Winter Wren 2 |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet 20 |
| Eastern Bluebird 117  Hermit Thrush 2 |
| American Robin 1  Gray Catbird 2 |
| Northern Mockingbird 37 |
| European Starling 2531 |
| American Tree Sparrow 87  Fox Sparrow 1 |
| Song Sparrow 167 |
| White-throated Sparrow 266 |
| White-crowned Sparrow 19 |
| Dark-eyed Junco 1214  Snow Bunting (1 count week) |
| Northern Cardinal 315 |
| Common Grackle 70  Brown-headed Cowbird 1 |
| Purple Finch 10 |
| House Finch 116 |
| American Goldfinch 65 |
| House Sparrow 538 |