

Summary of the Gustavus/Glacier Bay December 18, 2010 Christmas Bird Count



Count week got off to an exciting start with several rare and unexpected species, but count day was disappointing due to high winds. Strong north winds made seas rough on the Glacier Bay side of our count and birding conditions tough along the shore from Bartlett Cove to Point Gustavus. Of the two boats scheduled to go out, one never left the dock and the other had to turn back. As a result, a large portion of

our count circle was not covered and numbers are low or zero for some birds found on salt water and along the Beardslee Islands. Temperatures ranged from eight to eighteen degrees on count day. Snow cover was one to six inches. Standing fresh water was frozen.

Twenty people went out birding and two homes watched their feeders on count day. We tallied 62 species on count day and an additional 12 species during count week for a total of 74 species.

Three species new to the count were found on count day- Anna's Hummingbird, Eurasian Collared-Dove, and White-throated Sparrow. All three had been coming to different feeders in town prior to the count. All three are rare.

Other species seen during count week that are rare or rare in winter were Canvasback, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Sandhill Crane, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Savannah Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Lapland Longspur.

Six species had record high counts- Trumpeter Swan, Black Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Dunlin, Glaucous-winged Gull, and Rusty Blackbird.

Trumpeter Swans started being seen on the count in the 1990s and their numbers have slowly gone up. In recent winters, it has not been unusual to see several dozen Trumpeter Swans on the Bartlett River and small numbers of swans in other locations around town.

Black Scoters have been seen on the count for many years, but a count of 395 in 2005 more than doubled the previous high count. This year a group of 400 Black Scoters was well west

of town and a second group of 78 Black Scoters was near town. This may be the highest Black Scoter count ever for the area?

With the exception of two birds in 1989, Dunlin first appeared in the count in 2003 with 820. While the current year's 2,100 Dunlin is a record for the count, it falls within "normal" numbers for what we have been seeing on Gustavus beaches in recent winters. It seems likely that some of the past high counts for Sanderlings and Rock Sandpipers included Dunlin.

Three species had the second highest count of the count's history- Mew Gull, American Tree Sparrow, and Bohemian Waxwing.

One Snowy Owl was seen east of town by three people on count day, but it was outside the count circle.

Count Numbers

Canada Goose	322
Trumpeter Swan	41 (Record high count.)
Gadwall	2
American Wigeon	31
Mallard	483
Northern Pintail	count week
Green-winged Teal	22
Canvasback	count week (Rare species.)
Greater Scaup	10
Harlequin Duck	39
Surf Scoter	639
White-winged Scoter	737
Black Scoter	478 (Record high count.)
unidentified scoter	130
Long-tailed Duck	17
Bufflehead	157
Common Goldeneye	43 (Record high count.)
Barrow's Goldeneye	104
Common Merganser	10
Red-breasted Merganser	58
Red-throated Loon	count week
Pacific Loon	15
Common Loon	28
unidentified loon	10
Horned Grebe	4
Red-necked Grebe	2
Double Crested Cormorant	1
Pelagic Cormorant	32
Great Blue Heron	1

Bald Eagle	36
Sharp-shinned Hawk	count week (Rare in winter, becoming more common.)
Sandhill Crane	count week (Rare in winter.)
Sanderling	130
Rock Sandpiper	175
Dunlin	2,100 (Record high count.)
unidentified shorebird	125
Wilson's Snipe	1
Black-legged Kittiwake	1
Mew Gull	1,921 (Second highest count.)
Glaucous-winged Gull	942 (Record high count.)
unidentified gull	1,000
Common Murre	33
Pigeon Guillemot	16
Marbled Murrelet	4
Eurasian Collared-Dove	1 (New to count. Rare species.)
Northern Pygmy-Owl	count week
Anna's Hummingbird	1 (New to count. Rare species.)
Belted Kingfisher	2
Downy Woodpecker	count week
Hairy Woodpecker	5
American Three-toed Woodpecker	count week (Rare species.)
Steller's Jay	17
Black-billed Magpie	32
Northwestern Crow	58
Common Raven	46
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	39
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3
Brown Creeper	count week
Pacific Wren	7 (Winter Wren)
American Dipper	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	29
American Robin	2
Varied Thrush	7
Bohemian Waxwing	25 (Second highest count.)
American Tree Sparrow	22 (Second highest count.)
Savannah Sparrow	count week (Rare in winter.)
Song Sparrow	14
Swamp Sparrow	count week (Rare species.)
White-throated Sparrow	1 (New to count. Rare species.)
Dark-eyed Junco	128
Lapland Longspur	count week (Rare in winter.)
Snow Bunting	83
Rusty Blackbird	20 (Record high count. Rare in winter.)
Pine Grosbeak	2
Red Crossbill	24

White-winged Crossbill	208
unidentified crossbill	29
Common Redpoll	39
Pine Siskin	85

-Summary By Nat Drumheller

