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A SUMMARY OF THE 56th CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT IN NEW YORK STATE

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This paper summarizes the Christmas Bird Counts in New York State conducted from December 24 1955 to January 2 1956 (see 1956, *Audubon Field Notes* 10 (2): 82-93). The 55th Count was summarized in the last issue of this magazine (6 (1): 13-15), and future summaries will be provided yearly. In the species tabulations two numbers are given, first the number of counts on which it was reported, second the total number of birds seen.

LONG ISLAND — Temperature on the nine counts varied from 15° to 24°F. 144 individuals cooperated, varying from one to 50 observers per count group. 498 hours were spent in the field, 392½ afoot, 91 in cars, 19 on boats and 6 on bicycles. 159 miles were traveled, 378 afoot, 1028 by car and 65 by boat. Total species: 146; total birds, 196,277.

Common Loon 9, 106; Red-throated Loon 7, 29; Red-necked Grebe 2, 4; Horned Grebe 9, 768; Pied-billed Grebe 6, 80; Gannet, 4, 18; European Cormorant 4, 32; Double-crested Cormorant 3, 5; **American Egret** 1, 4 (S. Nassau Co.); Great Blue Heron 8, 122; Black-crowned Night Heron 7, 103; American Bittern 3, 8; Mute Swan 6, 456; Whistling Swan 1, 1; Canada Goose 5, 755; Brant 3, 3695; Mallard 6, 936; Black Duck 8, 9516; Gadwall 1, 18; American Widgeon 5, 399; Pintail 5, 248; Green-winged Teal 5, 84; Shoveller 1, 32; Wood Duck 2, 4; Redhead 4, 84; Ring-necked Duck 5, 138; Canvasback 5, 364; Greater Scaup Duck 8, 31,476; Lesser Scaup Duck 5, 144; American Goldeneye 8, 1882; Bufflehead 7, 233; Old-squaw 8, 890; Harlequin Duck 2, 2; White-winged Scoter 9, 11167; Surf Scoter 6, 1214; American Scoter 8, 3551; Ruddy Duck 4, 99; Hooded Merganser 4, 47; American Merganser 6, 411; Red-breasted Merganser 8, 5181; Sharp-shinned Hawk 4, 10; Cooper's Hawk 5, 8; Red-tailed Hawk 4, 16; Red-shouldered Hawk 1, 4; Rough-legged Hawk 1, 1; Bald Eagle 1, 1; Marsh Hawk 6, 51; **Gyrfalcon** 1, 1 (black phase, S. Nassau Co.) Pigeon Hawk 1, 1; Sparrow Hawk 8, 88; Ruffed Grouse 1, 2; Bob-white 2, 45; Ring-necked Pheasant 7, 44; Clapper Rail 5, 13; Virginia Rail 1, 6; Florida Gallinule 1, 1; American Coot 6, 247; Piping Plover 1, 2; Killdeer 5, 38; Black-bellied Plover 3, 21; Woodcock 2, 4; Wilson's Snipe 7, 32; Lesser Yellow-legs 1, 1; Greater Yellow-legs 1, 2; Purple Sandpiper 4, 166; Red-backed Sandpiper 4, 151; Sanderling 4, 657; Glaucous Gull 1, 1; Iceland Gull 2, 2; Great Black-backed Gull 9, 1711; Herring Gull 9, 39357; Ring-billed Gull 9, 975; Bonaparte's Gull 4, 436.

Mourning Dove 6, 570; Barn Owl 1, 2; Screech Owl 4, 11; Horned Owl 1, 2; Long-eared Owl 2, 3; Short-eared Owl 1, 5; Saw-whet Owl 1, 1; Belted Kingfisher 6, 32; Yellow-shafted Flicker 6, 68; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1, 3; Hairy Woodpecker 6,40; Downy Woodpecker 8, 173; **Western Kingbird** 1, 1, (Brooklyn); Eastern Phoebe 2, 2; Horned Lark 7, 700; Blue Jay 7, 696; American Crow 8, 1735; Fish Crow, 3, 24; Black-capped Chickadee 8, 552; White-breasted Nuthatch 6, 123; Red-breasted Nuthatch 6, 91; Brown Creeper 4, 10; Winter Wren 6, 14; Carolina Wren 4, 13; Long-billed March Wren 3, 8; Mockingbird 2, 3; Catbird 4, 20; Brown Thrasher 3, 9; American Robin 8, 416; Hermit Thrush 4, 24; Eastern Bluebird 1, 36; Golden-crowned Kinglet 4, 35; American Pipit 1, 3; Cedar Waxwing 3, 27; Gray Shrike 3, 3; Loggerhead Shrike 1, 1; Common Starling 8, 48749; Myrtle Warbler 8, 632; **Yellow-breasted Chat** 2, 2 (Cent. Suffolk and S. Nassau Cos.); House Sparrow 8, 12,859; Eastern Meadowlark 7, 369; Red-winged Blackbird 4, 458; **Baltimore Oriole** 1, 1 (N. Nassau Co.); Rusty Blackbird 3, 36; Purple Grackle 2, 16; Brown-headed Cowbird 4, 724; Cardinal 4, 43; Evening Grosbeak 2, 8; Purple Finch 4, 26; House Finch 1, 27; Common Redpoll 2, 19; Pine Siskin 5, 127; American Goldfinch 6, 605; Red Crossbill 1, 15; White-winged Crossbill 3, 6; Eastern Towhee 4, 18; Ipswich Sparrow 4, 5; Savannah Sparrow 7, 394; Sharp-tailed Sparrow 1, 3; Seaside Sparrow 2, 5; Vesper Sparrow 4, 29; Slate-colored Junco 7, 1773; Oregon Junco 1, 1; Tree Sparrow 8, 2381; Chipping Sparrow 2, 5; Field Sparrow 6, 95; White-crowned Sparrow 1, 11; White-throated Sparrow 7, 1347; Fox Sparrow 5, 116; Swamp Sparrow 7, 89; Song Sparrow 8, 1154; Lapland Longspur 2, 5; Snow Bunting 7, 467. (Also during count period: Snow Goose, Black-legged Kittiwake)

MAINLAND NEW YORK — Temperature on the 27 counts varied from -7° to 36°F. 455 individuals cooperated, varying from 1 to 60 observers per count group. 1121 hours were spent in the field, 681¾ afoot, 18 on boats and 686 in cars. 5442 miles were traveled, 584 afoot, 4754 by car and 104 by boat. Total species: 139; total birds 297,432.

Common Loon 3, 13; Red-throated Loon 3, 7; Horned Grebe 11, 358; Pied-billed Grebe 10, 40; European Cormorant 2, 20; Double-crested Cormorant 1, 6; Great Blue Heron 8, 54; Black-crowned Night Heron 3, 12; Mute Swan 5, 24; Canada Goose 2, 371; Snow Goose 1, 1; Mallard 17, 1600; Black Duck 24, 10059; Gadwall 3, 4; European Widgeon 1, 1; American Widgeon 4, 65; Pintail 6, 24; Green-winged Teal 3, 16; Shoveller 1, 1; **Wood Duck** 3, 4; Redhead 6, 2763; Ring-necked Duck 7, 158; Canvasback 12, 17145 (**10950 Buffalo**); Greater Scaup Duck 11, 26869; Lesser Scaup Duck 8, 112; American Goldeneye 13, 3855; Bufflehead 10, 594; Old-squaw 6, 378; White-winged Scoter 7, 637; Surf Scoter 3, 5; American Scoter 4, 31; Ruddy Duck 4, 83; Hooded Merganser 8, 83; American Merganser 17, 5684; Red-breasted Merganser 11, 785; Goshawk 5, 6; Sharp-shinned Hawk 6, 10; Cooper's Hawk 13, 23; Red-tailed Hawk 17, 114; Red-shouldered Hawk 8, 20; Rough-legged Hawk 5, 13; Bald Eagle 5, 10; Marsh Hawk 6, 14; Peregrine Falcon 3, 4; Sparrow Hawk 21, 142; Ruffed Grouse 17, 50; Bob-white 1, 3; Ring-necked

Pheasant 24, 675; **Wild Turkey** 1, 20 (Deposit: probably a release); Virginia Rail 2, 7; American Coot 8, 209; Killdeer 4, 63; Black-bellied Plover 1, 12; Ruddy Turnstone 1, 2; Woodcock 1, 1; Wilson's Snipe 3, 6; Greater Yellow-legs 1, 1; Purple Sandpiper 4, 63; Sanderling 1, 5; Glaucous Gull 5, 16; Iceland Gull 3, 9; Great Black-backed Gull 12, 704; Herring Gull 23, 40654; Ring-billed Gull 13, 5826; **Franklin's Gull** 1, 1 (Buffalo); Laughing Gull 2, 8; Bonaparte's Gull 3, 1820; **Black-legged Kittiwake** 1, 1 (Buffalo).

Mourning Dove 14, 410; Barn Owl 1, 1; Screech Owl 10, 29; Horned Owl 13, 28; Barred Owl 5, 7; Long-eared Owl 2, 5; Short-eared Owl 3, 12; Saw-whet Owl 3, 4; Belted Kingfisher 14, 37; Yellow-shafted Flicker 12, 31; Pileated Woodpecker 11, 21; Red-bellied Woodpecker 4, 4; Red-headed Woodpecker 2, 3; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 2, 2; Hairy Woodpecker 23, 233; Downy Woodpecker 27, 682; Horned Lark 11, 206; Blue Jay 26, 1705; American Crow 26, 10095; Fish Crow 2, 5; Black-capped Chickadee 27, 3764; Tufted Titmouse 4, 56; White-breasted Nuthatch 28, 496; Red-breasted Nuthatch 11, 53; Brown Creeper 21, 92; Winter Wren 8, 14; Carolina Wren 5, 5; Long-billed Marsh Wren 1, 1; Catbird 3, 5; Brown Thrasher 2, 4; American Robin 19, 453; Hermit Thrush 4, 14; Eastern Bluebird 4, 92; Golden-crowned Kinglet 13, 77; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 2, 2; Cedar Waxwing 11, 618; Gray Shrike 14, 41; Loggerhead Shrike 1, 1; Common Starling 27, 131949; Myrtle Warbler 5, 11; **Yellow-breasted Chat** 1, 1 (Staten Island); House Sparrow 27, 9263; Eastern Meadowlark 5, 110; Red-winged Blackbird 12, 490; **Baltimore Oriole** 1, 1 (Bronx-Westchester); Rusty Blackbird 4, 36; Purple Grackle 7, 19; Brown-headed Cowbird 8, 562; Cardinal 20, 398; Evening Grosbeak 19, 710; Purple Finch 9, 128; House Finch 1, 64; Pine Grosbeak 6, 90; Common Redpoll 11, 580; Pine Siskin 10, 368; American Goldfinch 20, 586; Red Crossbill 1, 3; White-winged Crossbill 2, 7; Eastern Towhee 7, 23; Savannah Sparrow 2, 44; Vesper Sparrow 1, 3; Slate-colored Junco 24, 2036; Tree Sparrow 26, 5181; Chipping Sparrow 2, 4 (Port Chester-Greenwich-Stamford, Bronx-Westchester); Field Sparrow 3, 64; White-throated Sparrow 13, 760; Fox Sparrow 3, 27; Swamp Sparrow 7, 72; Song Sparrow 18, 649; Lapland Longspur 3, 5; Snow Bunting 10, 1506. (Also during count period: Clapper Rail, Yellow-throat, Snowy Owl, **Tufted Duck** (Manhattan), Red-necked Grebe, Oregon Junco.)

Totals for entire state: 161 species; 493709 individuals.

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NOTES

A Survey of Eagles. — The nesting success of the Bald Eagle in Florida has declined drastically in the last few years. Some ten years ago approximately 150 young were banded; in 1952 only 25. In a letter written in late February Charles Broley states that he banded only one this winter and probably would be able to band only two more: in a three county area formerly having some 65 nests, only three produced young.

With other reports also indicating a decline in numbers of Bald Eagles, the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia formed a committee to study the eagle's status in the Chesapeake Bay region, and they have suggested that a similar study be started in the Great Lakes Basin. Since I have been making a long term study of the Golden Eagle in the Appalachians and have in its course learned something of the Bald Eagle as well, it has been suggested that I undertake to broaden the scope of my survey to include the latter species. In order to do this for New York and adjacent areas, the help of observers in these areas will be needed. Federation of New York State Bird Clubs members can be of invaluable assistance in this project by collecting data. Perhaps an interested participant may be enlisted for each club area who will take it upon himself to find out the past, present and continuing status of the eagles and to help assemble this data. Interested Federation members are invited to contact the author.

In such a survey the help of fishermen and hunters can be of even more value because of the greater number and more extensive coverage. Since many sportsmen confuse the Osprey with the Bald Eagle and because of the intrinsic interest in the