

NEW YORK STATE WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 1978

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This year's Federation Waterfowl Count period, from January 7 to January 15, 1978, was not as cold as 1977. However, most of the usual smaller lakes and other bodies of water were frozen over. During the count period the larger lakes and rivers and Long Island did not experience the heavy freeze-up of a year ago. As so often happens in mid-winter, a week or so can make all the difference in getting a good count or not. The total count this year was down to 129,907, a 38.9% decrease from 1977.

The Department of Environmental Conservation mid-winter aerial waterfowl survey was from January 3 to January 19, 1978, and yielded a total of 139,238 birds, 31.2% lower than 1977, and 28.4% below the long term average.

In looking at the two counts it is apparent that they show comparable decreases overall. Some reasons for the lower counts are the sharp decreases in Black Ducks, Redheads, Canvasbacks, scaups and scoters on the ground count and Brant, Black Ducks, Redheads, Canvasbacks, Common Goldeneyes, Oldsquaws, scoters and mergansers on the aerial count. On the other hand there were some pluses such as notable increases in Canada Geese, American Wigeons, Common Goldeneyes and Oldsquaws on the ground count and Canada Geese and Buffleheads on the aerial count.

The only places where there are opposing trends are with Common Goldeneyes and Oldsquaws. The major differences in numbers of these two species occurred in western New York waters, chiefly in Region 1. More than likely this was due to the fact that the aerial count was made approximately ten days later than the ground count.

The very large decrease in scaup numbers on the ground count took place in Region 10 in the area around and in New York City's five boroughs. This is an area that is not covered on the aerial survey because of aerial traffic problems. At this writing there is no indication that the missing birds were located elsewhere along the Atlantic coast.

In checking federal figures for the Atlantic Flyway, total waterfowl numbers declined almost 19 percent from last year but were only six percent below the average for the last 10 years.

A direct listing of the most abundant species, by ground count and aerial survey, and comparing 1977 with 1978, is given below.

	<u>UPSTATE</u>				<u>LONG ISLAND</u>				<u>TOTALS</u>			
	<u>Aerial</u>		<u>Ground</u>		<u>Aerial</u>		<u>Ground</u>		<u>Aerial</u>		<u>Ground</u>	
	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Canada Goose	4,370	8,911	7,662	5,458	4,092	5,587	4,443	8,482	8,462	14,498	12,105	13,940
Brant	0	0	1	0	13,622	8,936	3,438	3,218	13,622	8,936	3,439	3,218
Mallard	4,782	2,173	10,551	11,183	2,321	2,433	7,274	5,704	7,103	4,606	17,825	16,887
Black Duck	7,052	4,178	2,765	2,410	18,506	14,637	15,285	8,680	25,558	18,815	18,050	11,090
Am. Wigeon	215	0	78	22	24	116	1,193	1,970	239	116	1,271	1,992
Redhead	8,710	1,830	8,205	5,788	15	0	154	89	8,725	1,830	8,359	5,877
Canvasback	6,929	2,890	5,153	2,919	1,498	1,920	5,399	3,615	8,427	4,810	10,552	6,534
Scaup (both)	6,067	10,981	1,681	6,329	29,745	25,730	82,427	25,316	35,812	36,711	86,611	31,635
Com. Goldeneye	5,671	6,730	9,019	11,284	4,271	1,459	1,949	1,040	9,942	8,189	10,967	12,324
Bufflehead	60	64	760	1,033	931	2,025	2,457	2,156	991	2,089	3,217	3,189
Oldsquaw	98	1,119	751	3,469	3,180	493	1,214	532	3,278	1,612	1,965	4,001
Scoters (all 3)	1	146	67	27	32,891	1,440	20,080	3,951	32,892	1,586	20,147	3,878
Mergansers (all 3)	41,026	30,742	10,173	7,609	4,739	3,774	1,334	3,448	45,765	34,516	11,507	11,057
Am. Coot	355	249	1,692	1,194	15	46	393	141	370	295	2,085	1,335
TOTALS	85,336	70,013	58,558	58,725	115,850	68,596	147,040	68,342	201,186	138,609	205,598	127,067

GROUND SURVEY BY REGIONS -- JANUARY 1978

	1	2	3	4
Common Loon	1	1	4	
Red-throated Loon				
Red-necked Grebe				
Horned Grebe	5	5	35	
Pied-billed Grebe			14	
Great Cormorant				
Double-crested Cormorant				
Mute Swan				
Whistling Swan				
Canada Goose	54	3	4,595	
Brant				
Snow Goose				
Mallard	2,596	2,652	3,082	328
Black Duck	217	117	1,124	85
Mallard x Black Duck			4	
Gadwall	7	2	68	
Pintail	3	1		
Green-winged Teal				
American Wigeon	22			
Northern Shoveler				
Wood Duck		1	3	
Redhead	44	20	5,599	3
Ring-necked Duck	2		58	
Canvasback	2,271	14	566	
Scaup (both species)	1,978	1,054	1,694	
Common Goldeneye	6,656	1,598	567	27
Barrow's Goldeneye	1			
Bufflehead	509	60	290	
Oldsquaw	3,265	64	2	
Harlequin Duck	1	1		
Common Eider				
King Eider				
White-winged Scoter	24			
Surf Scoter				
Black Scoter				
Scoter (sp?)				
Ruddy Duck			2	
Hooded Merganser	2	2	6	
Common Merganser	6,045	349	32	19
Red-breasted Merganser	56	52	6	1
Duck (sp?)				
American Coot	4	4	1,181	
TOTALS	23,763	6,000	18,932	463

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS

5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
1				1	63	71
					4	4
					1	1
2				5	91	143
1					23	38
					28	28
					4	4
				84	328	412
					6	6
156		350	3	297	8,482	13,940
					3,218	3,218
				3	1	4
1,069	18		489	949	5,704	16,887
161	76	31	268	331	8,680	11,090
5						9
7	1				303	388
				1	251	256
			2		148	150
					1,970	1,992
					172	172
			3	2		9
118	2		2		89	5,877
1				221	7	289
		49		19	3,615	6,534
1,599				4	25,306	31,635
1,063	378	973	4	18	1,040	12,324
		1			1	3
20	1	150		3	2,156	3,189
138					532	4,001
					1	3
					372	372
3					14	17
					2,315	2,339
3					540	543
					756	756
					240	240
					34	36
2					29	41
280	252	96	82	280	13	7,448
47					3,406	3,568
				10	525	535
2				3	141	1,335
<u>4,678</u>	<u>728</u>	<u>1,650</u>	<u>853</u>	<u>2,231</u>	<u>70,609</u>	<u>129,907</u>

AERIAL SURVEY – JANUARY 1978
Department of Environmental Conservation

	<u>Upstate</u>	<u>Long Island</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Mute Swan	0	554	554
Canada Goose	8,911	5,587	14,498
Brant	0	8,936	8,936
Mallard	2,173	2,433	4,606
Black Duck	4,178	14,637	18,815
American Wigeon	0	116	116
Redhead	1,830	0	1,830
Canvasback	2,890	1,920	4,810
Scaup (both species)	10,981	25,730	36,711
Common Goldeneye	6,730	1,459	8,189
Bufflehead	64	2,025	2,089
Oldsquaw	1,119	493	1,612
Scoters (all three)	146	1,440	1,586
Ruddy Duck	0	10	10
Eiders (both species)	0	65	65
Mergansers (all three)	30,742	3,774	34,516
American Coot	<u>249</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>295</u>
Totals	70,013	69,225	139,238

I would like to thank all who participated, especially the regional coordinators who are:

Region 1—Dr. Alan H. Reckhow	Region 6—Lee B. Chamberlaine
2—Walter Listman	7—John M. C. Peterson
3—John Confer	8—Paul Grattan
4—Leslie E. Bemont	9—Edward D. Treacy
5—Dr. Fritz G. Scheider	10—Stephen B. Dempsey

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