

NEW YORK STATE WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 1990

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The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., held the 1990 winter Waterfowl Count from 13 through 21 Jan, with 14 Jan as the target date. All Regions completed their counts within the established dates. Weather during the count period was nearly normal following about the coldest December on record. Some bodies of water were open but many were not. One or two Regional compilers indicated that a few areas were not covered but thought their counts were not significantly affected by these misses.

The grand total count of 316,594 (Table 1) was up a substantial 15.9% over 1989, and a huge 42.2% above the seventeen year (1973-1989) average of 222,548. Five of the seven species showing downward trends last year have reversed themselves. However, four species that showed upward trends last year unfortunately are in a downward slide this year. Some of the more disconcerting declines showed up in Atlantic Brant, Canvasback, Oldsquaw and Ruddy Duck. It was nice to record increases for Redhead, goldeneye, Bufflehead and Red-breasted Merganser. Canada Goose continues to increase, supposedly because fewer numbers are migrating to states south of New York. Region 2 reported three "Richardson's" race of the Canada Goose and Region 3 reported an Eared Grebe!

Comparing 1990 to 1989 count figures (Table 2), the commoner species again showed a 9-6 split in favor of increases although some different species changed as compared 1989. When comparing 1990 count figures with the 1973-1989 seventeen year average (Table 3), we find a 7-6 split, again in favor of increases.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service midwinter waterfowl inventory showed all geese in the Atlantic Flyway (Maine to Florida) were up 11% from 1989, including a Canada Goose increase of 22%. However, Atlantic Brant showed a 4% decrease. The dabbling ducks again showed an overall increase of 14% over 1989, even after the 16% increase recorded last year. All species were up with the exceptions of Green-winged Teal (down 4%), Blue-winged Teal (down 7%) and Wood Duck (down 2%, compared to a 3.58% drop last year). The vagaries of the weather more than likely were responsible for these slight variations. Diving ducks, including sea ducks, showed an over all decrease of 7.3% compared to 1989. A 17% decrease in scaup, Redhead, Ring-necked

Duck and Ruddy Duck was offset by a 56% increase in all sea duck. American Coot also showed a 25% decrease from 1989 and a 13% decrease from the most recent ten year average. Most American Coot again were wintering in Georgia and Florida. In summary, waterfowl in the Atlantic Flyway were up 7% over 1989, and 10% over the 1930-1989 average.

The Department of Environmental Conservation 1990 aerial survey was conducted from 2-9 Jan 1990. The results are presented in Table 4. Table 5 compares 1989 to 1990 aerial survey results. In contrast to 1989, the 1990 NYSDEC aerial count total did not come at all near the FNYSC ground count total.

The 1991 Federation Waterfowl Count dates are from 12 through 20 Jan, with Sunday, 13 Jan, the target date.

I wish to thank the upwards of one hundred observers who participated this year. A special thanks also to the Regional Compilers who coordinated all those volunteers. A good friend of many years, Region 2 compiler Warren Lloyd, passed away 28 Feb 1989, shortly after he had submitted his Regional report. He is sorely missed. The new compiler for Region 2 is Kevin Griffith. Welcome! The Region 9 report again was turned in by Helen Manson, which qualifies her as compiler. Thanks, Helen! The Regional Compilers were:

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|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Region 1. Wavel Barber | Region 6. Lee Chamberlaine |
| 2. Kevin Griffith | 7. John Peterson |
| 3. Eric Donohue | 8. Paul Grattan |
| 4. Leslie Bemont | 9. Helen Manson |
| 5. Marge Rusk | 10. Stephen Dempsey |

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Table I. Regional totals for 1990 Waterfowl Count

Species \ Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Loon, Red-throated										10	10
Common			12							68	80
Grebe, Pied-billed	3	21								21	45
Horned	4	31			2		1			242	280
Red-necked			2								2
Cormorant, Great										200	200
Double-crested			1		1					43	45
Swan, Tundra			5								5
Mute								16	132	943	1,091
Goose, Snow	1								3	217	221
Brant										14,391	14,391
Canada	458	142	92,237	172	575			2,346	12,098	31,305	139,333
Wood Duck	5	38	3		2					13	61
Green-winged Teal					7				1	45	53
American Black Duck	350	1,277	3,889	197	401	31	112	364	388	15,682	22,691
Mallard	6,078	7,319	16,165	662	3,048	223	910	209	2,020	8,740	45,374
Mallard X Black Duck	1	88			2					23	114
N. Pintail	10	2	2		3				5	93	115
Blue-winged Teal	1										1
N. Shoveler					1					76	77
Gadwall	30	5	33		3					304	375
Wigeon, Eurasian										3	3
American	4		1							592	597

Canvasback	1,303	65	542		3			80	44	2,501	4,538
Redhead	15	166	7,797		39					82	8,099
Ring-necked Duck	1		38		9			1	60	183	292
Tufted Duck										1	1
Scaup, Greater	1,241	725	165		1,214					18,135	21,480
Lesser	25	1	5		4		2			144	181
species		2,505	561	2	744			3		6,236	10,051
Eider, Common										6	6
Harlequin Duck										13	13
Oldsquaw	1,980	6	2		30					1,736	3,754
Scoter, Black										10	10
Surf										388	388
White-winged	54	12			1					6,887	6,954
species										2,824	2,824
Goldeneye, Common	2,114	1,616	557	81	1,110	250	420	15	106	2,272	8,541
Bufflehead	356	134	439		99		15		6	6,030	7,079
Merganser, Hooded	4		25	1	7					412	449
Common	391	1,688	115	96	1,408	60	572	50	3,897	146	8,423
Red-breasted	53	617	13	1	92					4,476	5,252
Ruddy Duck										1,183	1,183
American Coot	49		421		2				4	243	719
unidentified			1,120							73	1,193
TOTAL	14,531	16,458	124,150	1,212	8,807	564	2,032	3,084	18,764	126,992	316,594

**Table II. Comparison of 1990 with 1989 for all species
totaling over 1000 individuals in 1990.**

Species	1989	1990	% change from 1989
Mute Swan	1,370	1,091	-20.4
Brant	20,564	14,391	-30.0
Canada Goose	94,006	139,333	48.2
American Black Duck	22,379	22,691	1.4
Mallard	28,232	45,374	60.7
Canvasback	7,264	4,538	-37.5
Redhead	7,422	8,099	9.1
scaup (both species)	21,527	31,712	47.3
Oldsquaw	7,677	3,754	-51.1
scoter (all species)	25,499	10,176	-60.1
goldeneye (both species)	7,785	8,541	9.7
Bufflehead	6,468	7,079	9.4
Common Merganser	7,758	8,423	8.6
Red-breasted Merganser	4,583	5,252	14.6
Ruddy Duck	1,883	1,183	-37.2
Total	264,417	311,637	17.9

Table III. Comparison of 1990 count with 1973-1989 average for all species totaling over 1000 individuals in 1990.

Species	1990	Average	% change
Brant	14,391	12,452	15.6
Canada Goose	139,333	40,759	241.8
American Black Duck	22,691	19,398	17.0
Mallard	45,374	23,734	91.2
Canvasback	4,538	10,968	-58.6
Redhead	8,099	6,450	25.6
scaup (both species)	31,712	56,220	-43.6
Oldsquaw	3,754	4,000	-6.2
scoter (all species)	10,176	13,328	-23.6
Common Goldeneye	8,541	11,219	-23.9
Bufflehead	7,079	4,836	46.4
Common Merganser	8,423	12,959	-35.0
Red-breasted Merganser	5,252	2,541	106.7
Total	309,363	218,864	41.3

**Table IV. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Aerial Count, 2-9 January 1990. All species of 1,000 individuals or more.**

Species	Upstate	Long Island	Total
Mute Swan	27	1,335	1,362
Brant		18,950	18,950
Canada Goose	89,853	22,516	112,369
American Black Duck	6,495	18,357	24,852
Mallard	12,944	1,602	14,546
Canvasback	4,000	2,928	6,928
Redhead	6,690		6,690
scaup (both species)	5,037	28,057	33,094
Oldsquaw	535	1,086	1,621
goldeneye (both species)	4,116	3,197	7,313
Bufflehead		1,215	1,215
merganser (all species)	15,062	1,619	16,681
Total	144,759	100,862	245,621

**Table V. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
1989 and 1990 Aerial Counts compared, with percent change from 1985
for all species with 1,000 individuals or more in 1990.**

Species	1989	1990	% change
Mute Swan	1,835	1,362	-25.8
Brant	10,873	18,950	74.3
Canada Goose	115,574	112,369	-2.8
American Black Duck	29,606	24,852	-16.1
Mallard	25,950	14,546	-43.9
Canvasback	10,250	6,928	-32.4
Redhead	6,377	6,690	4.9
scaup (both species)	32,707	33,094	1.2
Oldsquaw	2,369	1,621	-31.6
goldeneye (both species)	5,930	7,313	23.3
merganser (all species)	21,059	16,681	-20.8
Total	262,530	244,406	-6.9