

JANUARY WATERFOWL COUNT 2022

Bill Ostrander

80 Westmont Ave., Elmira, NY 14905
browncreeper9@gmail.com

More than 381 volunteers went into the field 15-23 January 2022 and conducted the New York State Ornithological Association's January Waterfowl Count. The volunteers logged 1086.66 party-hours and counted 384,400 waterfowl. The methodology of the count is described in detail by Swift (2007: January waterfowl counts, 2005-2007, and some observations on long-term trends; *The Kingbird* 57: 198-213).

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Daily high temperatures in January leading up to the count period were mostly above freezing throughout the state, but most lows were below 25° F. Many lows in much of the state were single-digit or below zero. Both Saturdays in the count period were very cold with temperatures well below zero. Consequently, only large bodies of water and turbulent portions of streams were open. Several inches of snow fell 17-18 January and most of it persisted through the count period.

RESULTS

In this summary, I will compare the 2022 numbers with the average annual numbers from the decade, 2001-2010. The total number of waterfowl counted this year, 384,400, was 694 (0.18%) more than the average for the 2001-2010 decade. Canada Geese, Brant, and Mute and Tundra Swans compensated for the lower numbers of dabbling ducks, diving ducks, and all other waterfowl.

Some species had higher counts than the 2001-2010 decade average: Ross's Goose, Canada Goose, Cackling Goose, Pink-footed Goose (the Count's first), Brant, Mute Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, and Ruddy Duck. The counts of 150 Wood Ducks, 44,589 Redheads, 5,506 Ring-necked Ducks and 3,459 Hooded Mergansers were the highest counts ever.

LONG-TERM TRENDS

We have been watching for many years the long-term trend of increasing numbers of Tundra Swans wintering in New York State, the number peaking at 4,065 in 2016. In 2022, the count was 1,473, down from last year.

By comparing the averages for the periods 1973-2000, 2001-2010, and 2013-2022 possible long-term trends in New York State’s winter waterfowl populations can be identified. Possible long-term increases can thus be seen for Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Brant, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Common Eider, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Red-breasted Merganser. Long-term decreases may be happening to American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, scaup (sp.), White-winged Scoter, Common Merganser and Great Cormorant.

FUTURE COUNTS

You can help with the 2023 count by contacting your Regional compiler. Compiler contact information, and also historical data from past counts, is available online at:

<http://nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm>

The January Waterfowl Count is conducted in a nine-day period that begins the Saturday before Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (the third Monday in January). The next two count periods will be: 14-22 Jan 2023 (target date Sunday, 15 Jan); and 13-21 Jan 2024 (target date Sunday, 14 Jan).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2022 January Waterfowl Count. The many dedicated field observers volunteered many hours in the field. Regional and local compilers and coordinators deserve special thanks for making sure that the state had good coverage and for compiling the data in a timely manner. The Regional compilers, this year, were:

Region	Compiler	Region	Compiler
1	Debbie Suggs	6	Jeff Bolsinger
2	Robert Spahn	7	Gary Lee
3	Bill Ostrander	8	Bryan Swift
4	Gail Kirch	9	Sean Camillieri
5	Bill Purcell	10	Clifford Hagen

Table 1. Regional totals for the 2022 January Waterfowl Count.

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Snow Goose	1	0	1,092	2	9	0	0	2	13	652	1,771
Ross's Goose	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gr. White-fr. Goose	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	6
Pink-footed Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	119	18,822	18,941
Cackling Goose	7	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	2	16
Canada Goose	13,385	18,872	36,594	5,893	10,363	2,820	440	7,463	31,819	43,712	171,361
Mute Swan	11	449	37	0	56	104	0	1	567	79	2,015
Trumpeter Swan	0	0	0	0	13	14	0	0	0	0	27
Tundra Swan	643	3	728	5	62	32	0	0	0	0	1,473
swan species	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wood Duck	4	0	5	0	6	0	1	0	9	125	150
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Shoveler	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	726	800
Gadwall	26	1	106	16	4	11	1	0	141	1,195	1,501
Eurasian Wigeon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Am. Wigeon	10	0	99	0	1	0	0	0	26	389	525
Mallard	3,544	4,868	6,318	1,603	4,293	1,445	1,357	1,296	4,757	6,082	36,231
Am. Black Duck	145	681	1,093	166	362	155	80	180	768	3,930	7,560
Mallard X Black Duck	4	7	0	0	0	0	4	0	9	55	79
Northern Pintail	5	4	17	8	5	0	1	0	6	83	129
Green-winged Teal	1	1	8	0	1	0	0	0	15	153	179
Canvasback	5,515	4	19	1	0	0	0	0	3	131	5,673
Redhead	2,679	6,463	27,016	53	312	8,000	0	0	2	64	44,589
Ring-necked Duck	157	353	293	63	38	4	6	18	4,168	406	5,506
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Scaup	1,943	536	438	5	65	430	2	0	418	5,844	9,681

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Lesser Scaup	10	108	1,759	18	1	2	3	0	43	1190	3,134
scaup species	5,801	103	6	6	4	0	0	0	7	709	6,636
King Eider	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Common Eider	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	328	328
Harlequin Duck	0	3	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	7
Surf Scoter	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	136	141
White-winged Scoter	417	211	12	0	6	0	0	0	3	947	1,596
Black Scoter	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	271	272
scoter species	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	665	666
Long-tailed Duck	1,083	2,846	6	0	615	2,999	0	0	92	2,020	9,661
Bufflehead	1,373	33	237	21	40	67	37	2	513	3,948	6,271
Com. Goldeneye	3,242	1,134	2,217	156	624	2,031	734	611	174	780	11,703
Barrow's Goldeneye	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hooded Merganser	63	43	237	372	111	6	23	112	805	1,687	3,459
Com. Merganser	1,337	177	3,196	488	1,721	4,261	966	245	3,911	184	16,486
Red-br. Merganser	1,489	4,577	337	0	242	76	2	2	95	1,756	8,576
Ruddy Duck	0	6	1	1	0	0	0	1	87	4,003	4,099
Pied-billed Grebe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	29	16	46
Horned Grebe	0	21	2	0	0	0	8	0	3	107	141
Red-necked Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
Eared Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Am. Coot	3	81	159	22	6	0	0	0	141	147	559
Red-throated Loon	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	99	109
Common Loon	0	2	5	0	0	1	1	0	24	206	239
Great Cormorant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	88	123
Dbl.-cr. Cormorant	17	13	4	1	40	0	0	0	2	122	199
Other/Unidentified	946	6	254	0	1	106	0	150	161	103	1,727
TOTALS	43,865	41,613	82,299	8,900	19,003	22,567	3,669	10,083	49,013	103,388	384,400