

P.E.I. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1971-1984

By Geoff Hogan

Christmas Bird Counts are an annual event in cities, towns and communities across North America. Each year bird watchers prepare for the big event, signing up for favorite localities within the traditional 15-mile radius circles and hoping that this year will be the big one when viewing conditions are ideal, the birds are co-operative and when they will perhaps record a species not yet seen on this particular count. Well, some years you're lucky and other years you're not, but it's always enjoyable in any case.

During the revision of the P.E.I. bird checklist last winter, I tabulated all the results of the Christmas Bird Counts on P.E.I. since their inception in 1971 and will present my findings here. On P.E.I. we have 2 official count areas, namely the National Park count and the Hillsborough count, and one unofficial count area, the Montague count. The latter count was initiated in 1983 to collect similar data for southern King's County. The details of this year's count dates will be announced at the December Natural History Society meeting.

Average number of species recorded for all count days (total 29) - 36.

Lowest number of species recorded - 28 (Dec. 30, 1978, Hillsborough Count).

Highest number of species recorded - 45 (Jan. 2, 1984, Montague Count).

Total number of different species recorded (1971 - 1984) for all areas combined - 99.

The following is a list of the 99 species seen on P.E.I. Christmas Bird Counts from 1971 - 1984. The count areas where these species were seen are designated as follows: National Park (NP), Hillsborough (H), Montague (M).

Common Loon NP, H, M
Red-throated Loon H
Grebe sp. NP
Great Cormorant NP, H, M
Double-crested Cormorant NP, H, M
Great Blue Heron NP, H
Canada Goose NP, H, M
Brant NP
Mallard NP, H, M
Black Duck NP, H, M
Northern Pintail NP, H
Green-winged Teal NP, H, M
Northern Shoveler NP
Greater Scaup NP, H, M
Common Goldeneye NP, H, M
Barrows Goldeneye NP, H, M
Bufflehead NP, M
Oldsquaw NP, H, M
Common Eider NP, H
White-winged Scoter NP, H, M
Surf Scoter H
Black Scoter NP, H, M
Ruddy Duck NP
Hooded Merganser M
Common Merganser NP, H, M
Red-breasted Merganser NP, H, M
Northern Goshawk NP, H
Sharp-shinned Hawk NP, H, M
Red-tailed Hawk NP, H, M
Rough-legged Hawk NP, H
Bald Eagle NP, H, M
Northern Harrier NP
American Kestrel NP, H
Merlin NP, H
Ruffed Grouse NP, H, M
Ringed-necked Pheasant NP, H, M
Grey Partridge NP, H, M
Common Snipe H
Glaucous Gull NP, H, M
Iceland Gull NP, H, M
Greater Black-backed Gull NP, H, M
Lesser Black-backed Gull M
Herring Gull NP, H, M
Thayer's Gull H
Ringed-billed Gull NP, H, M
Bonaparte's Gull H, M
Black-legged Kittiwake H
Black Guillemot H
Common Murre NP
Rock Dove NP, H, M