

2024 GAAS Christmas Bird Count

Greater Akron Audubon Society
Christmas Bird Count Summary
Count Date: December 15, 2024

The 2024 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was conducted under cloudy, cold conditions and with rain/snow mix. Cold temperatures coupled with light freezing rain/snow mix and consistent winds made for a hard, and in some cases somewhat impossible day of birding. Some sectors had more difficult times finding individuals, while others had an easier time. Most water bodies were frozen over which made finding waterfowl species limited to flowing water features. Temperatures varied from a low of 32 to a high of 43 degrees Fahrenheit, with winds ranging from 5 to 15 mph.

Despite the less than desirable weather conditions, the species list had a great variety including 20 species of waterfowl, including both trumpeter and tundra swans, 8 raptor species, 6 species of woodpeckers. As in last year's count, only one species of warbler was counted: Yellow-rumped warbler. Overcoming the weather conditions, the species counted continued to increase from last years at 84, to 90 this year. The count this year had high counts of Gadwall (*Mareca strepera*), Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), Merlin (*Falco columbarius*), House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*), and Winter Wren (*Troglodytes hiemalis*). With low counts of Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*), Double-crested Cormorant (*Nannopterum auritum*), as well as Eastern Screech Owl (*Megascops asio*) and Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*). Total number of individuals (26605) was down from the previous year (135,351). This decline is due to no large flocks of black birds counted this year. We had a few species that needed rare bird forms and were ruled unusual species (US). No rare bird forms were needed though due to photos being submitted through Ebird. Additional descriptors as well as photos help immensely to confirm species accounts so if photos can be taken of possible rare/unusual species please do so.

Participation in the field increased from the previous year, despite the harsh birding conditions. Thank you for your continued dedication, loyalty, and willingness to get out and count those birds, whether that be in the field walking and hiking, driving or sitting at the feeder. The counts could not have grown and continued to be successful without your dedication and knowledge. We look forward to the 2025 count that will be held on Sunday, December 14th. Hoping beyond hope that we will indeed have better weather conditions this year! Thank you again for being part of the longest running citizen science survey in the world!

