

The 2022 Spring Bird Count Results

The first DuPage County Spring Bird Count (SBC) was held on May 5, 1973. Paul Mooring organized the first count, and there were seven participants out in the field on count day. They found 72 species with a total effort of 28.5 party hours. The second SBC in 1974 was more successful. Paul recruited 36 birders for the count who spent 80 party hours in the field and found 101 species.

From those humble beginnings 50 years ago, the SBC in DuPage County has grown to be a much-anticipated premier birding event. In 2022, the DuPage Birding Club coordinated the participation of 139 birders who spent a total of 381 party hours in the field on Saturday May 7th – a new record high for total effort on the count! All of those hours in the field resulted in finding 173 species and over 26,700 birds. That is considerably above the average species count over the 50 years of 155.5 species and 5 species higher than the number of species found in 2021. The all-time high species count of 188 species occurred in 2018.

Since 1973, we have recorded a total of 263 species on the Spring count in DuPage County. Having conducted the SBC in DuPage County for 50 years, one would expect that it would be difficult to find additional species in the County. However, in 2022 we actually added 3 new species to the SBC list: Trumpeter Swan, Neotropic Cormorant, and Common Redpoll. The swan was observed at McKee Marsh, the Neotropic Cormorant was a bird that was seen hanging out at Lambert Lake for some time, and the Common Redpoll was coming to a feeder in Aurora. The fact that we can add three new birds to the DuPage SBC list after 50 years of birding is truly amazing and a testament to the dedication and birding skills of all the participants.

So, what are the most common birds in DuPage County as indicated by the SBC results? They are Red-winged Blackbird, American Robin, Canada Goose, Tree Swallow, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.

We hit new high counts for several species including Hooded Merganser (10), Sora (111), Sandhill Crane (32) Tufted Titmouse (13), White-breasted Nuthatch (245) and American Pipit (10). It was also a great year for woodpeckers. New high counts were recorded for Red-bellied Woodpecker (471), Downy Woodpecker (329) and Pileated Woodpecker (11).

But, there were also some big misses on the count. We failed to find any Black-crowned Night Herons, Sedge Wrens, or Horned Larks. In the case of the Night Heron, we had not missed finding that species on the count since 1976.

You can look through the complete list of birds recorded on the 2022 SBC below. In addition, There is a spreadsheet showing count results back to 1973 when the first Spring Bird Count was

completed in the County. You can look at that table and see how bird populations have changed over the last 50 years.

Thanks to all the birders who volunteered to take part in the count this year. DuPage County is consistently near the top in number of participants throughout the State. Keep up the great work.

And speaking of great work, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Area Captains who do the work to organize and assure coverage of all the birding areas in the county for the Spring Bird Count. They are Dave Hodge, Kyle Wiktor, Margie and Al Busic, Dave Yeager, Herman Jensen, Urs Geiser, Eric Secker, Jeff Reitter, Glenn Perricone, Jim Huebler, Peter Kasper, Jerry and Jodi Zamirowski, Susan Kaley, Linda Radtke, Joe Suchecki, Mike Madsen, and Jim Green.

Not too early to plan for next year's count - keep open Saturday May 6th for the 2023 Spring Bird Count. Who knows, you may be the birder to find the next new species to add to our list.