

DuPage Birders Set Another Record Participation Rate for the 2024 Spring Bird Count.

DuPage birders and the DuPage Birding Club once again set a new record for participation and effort on the Spring Bird Count (SBC). After setting a new record of 148 participants in 2023, we surpassed that record with a total of 165 participants for this year's count. In addition, DuPage birders also set another record for the number of hours spent looking for birds on May 4th – 407 party hours. DuPage Birders have always supported the SBC and it great to see that enthusiasm and participation continues to grow.

With so many birders in the field, you might think that we were able to find a record number of species as well. But, that was not the case. All your efforts resulted in finding 170 species and 25,553 birds on this year's SBC. The number of species is below the long-term average of 177 while the number of birds found is slightly above average. We did not challenge the record of 188 species set in 2018.

We did not add any new species to the count this year, and nothing exceptionally rare or unusual was reported on this year's SBC. In fact, no birds reported required documentation this year. Among the more interesting birds was a Snow Goose seen flying over Naperville. It is only the second time a Snow Goose has been recorded on the SBC.

The top five birds reported according to abundance were – Red-winged Blackbird (4475), American Robin (2784), Canada Goose (1425), Mallard (1074), and Blue Jay (853).

We hit new high counts for several species including Killdeer (202), Turkey Vulture (129), Pileated Woodpecker (13), Warbling Vireo (233), Song Sparrow (740), Brown-headed Cowbird (810), and Yellowthroat (430). Continuing their long-term trend upward in DuPage County were Bald Eagle (17) and Osprey (28). It is nice to see those raptors continuing to become more common in the county.

The complete results of the 2024 SBC can be found under Bird Counts on the DBC website. In addition to the 2024 SBC results, there also is historical information on the SBC results included in two tables – one for the period 1973-2000 and another from 2001 to the present. You can explore the data on your own to look for long term trends in our DuPage County spring birds.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Area Captains who do the all work to organize and assure coverage of all the birding areas in the county for the SBC. They are Liza Gray, Kyle Wiktor, Nancy Allured, Dave Yeager, Mike Kalscheur, Urs Geiser, Diann Bilderback, Jeff Reiter, Glenn Perricone, Jim Huebler, Dave Splea, Jodie and Jerry Zamirowski, Susan Kaley, Linda Radtke, Joe Suchecki, Mike Madsen, and Jim Green. I very much appreciate all of their efforts and prompt reporting which makes my job as compiler much easier.

Not too early to plan for next year's count - keep open Saturday May 10th for the 2025 Spring Bird Count

Joe Suchecki

DuPage SBC Compiler