

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK – BIRD COUNTS DECEMBER, 2022

So, another year comes to an end there were three additions this month taking the list to 313. For the month 123 species located as against 126 for December, 2021. For the year there were 262 species as against 270 for last year (these are the four highest counts for the park). There were 31 surveys over 175 hours. The best days were 5,564 birds on the 25th and 65 species on the 23rd. The Christmas Bird Count was on the 23rd.

Red-throated Loons were seen on three dates the 12th, the 21st and the 24th. There was a Pacific Loon sitting on the sea on the 25th. Common Loons were seen on 16 dates with five on the 25th and the 26th. There were two Horned Grebes on the 15th. It was even a shearwater month! There was a Cory's Shearwater on the 14th with single Great Shearwaters on the 23rd and 28th. There were three Manx Shearwaters on the second (a high count) with another on the 3rd. Northern Gannets peaked at 687 on the 13th and 1,128 on the 14th. American White Pelicans were seen on seven dates with 38 on the 18th and 22 on the 23rd. Brown Pelicans peaked at 316 on the 14th. Double-crested Cormorants peaked at 158 on the 6th and 125 on the 13th. There was an immature Great Cormorant on the 17th. There were 38 Anhinga on the 7th.

As a new bird there was a Great White Heron on the 5th it flew to the south along the river. There was a Black-crowned Night-Heron on the 3rd. White Ibis peaked at 60 on the 19th. There were two Glossy Ibis on the 16th with one on the 19th and six on the 21st. There were nine Roseate Spoonbills on the 2nd with three on the 4th, one on the 13th, two on the 20th and four on the 22nd. Wood Storks peaked at 17 on the 19th. For the vultures there were 157 Black on the 28th and 370 Turkey on the 6th.

There was a Northern Pintail on the 11th. There were 30 Green-winged Teal on the 19th with four on the 25th. There were 19 Canvasback on the 1st with four on the 2nd, five on the 4th and eight on the 22nd. Redheads were seen on six dates with 40 on the 8th and 26 on the 23rd. There were eight Ring-necked Ducks on the 15th with one on the 27th. There were normally low numbers of Greater Scaup but 3,030 flew to the south on the 26th. Over the river there were 190 Lesser Scaup on the 17th with 520 there on the 30th. There were two Common Eiders on the 4th (joint high count) with one on the 23rd. Surf Scoters were seen on ten days with 11 on the 9th. There were single White-winged Scoter on the 6th, 9th, 15th, 23rd, 24th and 27th. Black Scoter peaked at 525 on the 9th. There were two Long-tailed Ducks on the 15th a joint high count. Buffleheads were seen on six days with four on the 2nd. There were six Hooded Mergansers on the 2nd with one on the 5th, two on the 14th and three on the 16th. There was a male Common Merganser on the 22nd it led a small flock of Red-breasted Mergansers. Finally for this group Red-breasted Mergansers peaked at 47 on the 11th and 49 on the 15th.

Bald Eagles peaked at five on the 12th. There were single Northern Harriers on the 1st and 5th. There was also a “resident” from the 17th to at least the 30th with two on 18th. There was a Sharp-shinned Hawk on the 1st. Single Red-tailed Hawks were seen on nine days. There was a resident male American Kestrel all month with two males sitting together on the 1st and the 21st. There was a Merlin on the 2nd with a Peregrine Falcon on the 18th.

There was a Sandhill Crane on the 17th. Red Knots were seen on eight days with 43 on the 4th, 42 on the 17th and 63 on the 23rd. A Purple Sandpiper flew to the south on the 15th. That is, it for the rarer shorebirds.

Pomarine Jaegers were seen on 14 days with 152 on the 2nd. Parasitic Jaegers were seen on 25 days with 26 on the 14th and 23 on the 25th. Laughing Gulls peaked at 4,000 on the 25th. There were single first-winter Franklin’s Gulls on the 22nd and the 24th. A new bird was a first winter Little Gull on the 13th initially it was sitting on the sea with a Laughing Gull before it left to the north. Bonaparte’s Gulls were seen on 12 days with 24 on the 14th. Ring-billed Gulls peaked at 100 on the 9th. Herring Gulls peaked at 450 on the 25th. There was a first-winter Iceland Gull on the 2nd. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen on 11 days with eight on the 2nd, seven on the 14th and seven again on the 31st. There was a first-winter Glaucous Gull on the 13th. There was a Black-legged Kittiwake on the 1st with five on the 13th (a new high count) and one on the 14th. There were singles Caspian Terns on the 3rd, 13th and 23rd. Royal Terns peaked at 205 on the 28th. Sandwich Terns peaked at 134 on the 13th and 146 on the 27th. Forster’s Terns peaked at 25 on the 14th. Black Skimmers were seen on seven dates with 665 on the 25th and 1,150 on the 24th a new high count. There were also two Razorbills on the 2nd another high count.

There was a White-winged Dove on the 22nd. There was a Great Horned Owl on the 8th with an Eastern Whip-poor-will on the same date. There was a Black-chinned Hummingbird on the 10th second record for the park. There was a Northern Flicker on the 28th. Single Pileated Woodpeckers were seen on four days with two on the 29th. Up to two Eastern Phoebe were seen to the 17th but not later. A Loggerhead Shrike was present all month with two on the 30th. There was a House Wren on the 3rd with a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on the 17th. There were single Ruby-crowned Kinglets on the 3rd and 29th. American Robins peaked at 410 on 14th, 660 on the 20th and 410 again on the 31st. Single Gray Catbirds were seen on four days with two on the 3rd and the 31st. European Starlings peaked at 540 on the 9th. There was an American Pipit on the 17th. Cedar Waxwings were seen on six days with 50 on the 14th and 60 on the 26th.

Yellow-rumped Warblers peaked at 38 on the 8th and 23 on the 19th. A Yellow-throated Warbler was present all month. There were single Prairie Warblers on the 6th and 30th. There were Common Yellowthroats on the 1st and the 2nd. The last new species was a Grasshopper Sparrow that was seen on the 1st. Common Grackles peaked at 51 on the 8th and Boat-tailed

Grackles peaked at 41 on the 23rd. Brown-headed Cowbirds peaked at 780 on the 4th and 840 on the 27th. House Finches peaked at 16 on the 3rd. Finally American Goldfinch peaked at 40 on the 8th and 45 on the 14th.

What will 2023 bring?

Harry Robinson