

The 69<sup>th</sup> Saskatoon Christmas bird and mammal count attracted 65 participants. Extreme cold is not unusual on this count. Just two years ago the high temperature for the day was -28°C, but this year the participants and the birds experienced the other extreme, as the high reached +6°C. The mild conditions had the greatest effect on waterfowl numbers and diversity which helped boost the species count to 45, the fourth highest ever.

Canada Geese (446% of the long-term average) and Mallard (369% of LTA) were abundant and no doubt taking advantage of the bare fields and easy access to waste grain. Several seldom-seen species were observed on the river: Snow Goose (2<sup>nd</sup> time in 69 years), Cackling Goose (2<sup>nd</sup> time), Ring-necked Duck (4<sup>th</sup> time) and Green-winged Teal (seen in the count period, 3<sup>rd</sup> time).

Another beneficiary of the warm temperature was a female Northern Cardinal that has been a daily visitor to a feeder on Valley Road since October. This is the third time a cardinal has been recorded on the count. Another unusual sighting was Ring-necked Pheasant, the first in 17 years. Until 1981 they were bred locally and released or escaped on occasion. A breeding population was never established this far north.

The Common Raven count was the lowest since 2006. The count peaked in 2013 and has since fallen by 87%. The Clark's Crossing and Pike Lake counts show similar but less dramatic patterns, with declines from the peak of 69% and 27% respectively.

Other species with counts less than half the 10-year average were Black-capped Chickadee, European Starling, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, Bohemian Waxwing and House Finch. The winter finches did not irrupt this year, their counts were all low.

Thank you to all who participated in the 2023 count. We hope to see you back again next year.



Stan Shadick, Organizer

John Patterson, Compiler

Note: all counts above have been corrected for effort, unless otherwise noted, so results from different years are comparable. (Corrected count = Raw count X Average party hours for all years ÷ Party hours).

Saskatoon Bird and Mammal Count - Dec 26, 2023

C1	C2	C3a	C3b	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	NEa	NEb	NEc	NW	NWc	SEa	SEb	SEc,d	SWa	SWb	Sector	Year	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
17	13	15	4	11	7	13	12	13	18	19	19	14	11	18	19	15	23	15	17	Total Species - count day	45	38	36	44	38	39	43	42	45	
		1							1			1									Total Species - count period	3	1	4		5	2	1	1	2
4.5	3.4	6.7	1.0	2.5	2.0	8.0	6.6	5.4	8.4	9.2	6.1	8.8	4.4	15.8	6.5	4.1	6.7	6.9	5.5	Party Hours	122.2	87.2	92.2	172.8	93.5	93.5	96.0	44.9	45.7	
3	4	5	1	1	1	2	3	2	10	5	3	5	2	6	2	3	2	2	4	Participants	65	69	73	99	77	61	69	80	81	

																				BIRDS										
		2																		Snow Goose	2									
		10							1												Cackling Goose	11							140	
216	3	800		19		12			253	644	450	11	275	54				25		Canada Goose	2231	11	47	186	1918	2100	776	680	175	
14	43			64					55	110					8			76		Mallard	370	77	186	142	46	85	9	19	10	
									-2											Green-winged Teal	-2									
																					Redhead									-1
				1																	Ring-necked Duck	1					2			
				2						1											Lesser Scaup	3			1		5	2		
																					Harlequin Duck								-1	1
19	17	6		100					158	78	15			6	9			54		Common Goldeneye	456	914	221	1032	721	178	121	1050	247	
										1											Merganser sp.	1								
																					Hooded Merganser				2					
																					Common Merganser			1						
															1						Ruffed Grouse	1						1		
															7				6		Sharp-tailed Grouse	13	75	14	32	9	64	35	46	7
														4		6	30	4			Gray Partridge	44	21		144			9		28
																1					Ring-necked Pheasant	1								
86	14	35	3	820	1	5	22	16	324	11	8	4	28	736	16	27	210	700	42	Rock Pigeon (feral)	3108	1396	924	2272	1410	2028	1314	1565	2486	
																	20				Eurasian Collared-Dove	20	12	15	32	40	40	30	30	21
																					Mourning Dove									1
																					Hawk sp.			1			1	1		
																					Accipiter sp.			1						
	1							2	2										1		Sharp-shinned Hawk	6	3	1	3	1	-1	2	3	
													1								American Goshawk	1	1		3					
										1											Bald Eagle	3	-1	3	3			-1		2
															1						Rough-legged Hawk	1						1	1	-1
																					Snowy Owl	1								2
											1										Great Horned Owl	3		1	1	-1	2	1	4	3
																					Northern Hawk Owl			-1						
																					Northern Saw-whet Owl	-1		-1	1	-1				
															1						Woodpecker sp.	1						1		2
																					Picoides sp.			3	1					
																					American Three-toed Woodpecker					-1	1			
																					Black-backed Woodpecker					-1				

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3		2				6	1	1	7	1	3	1		6	4	1	9	1	12	Downy Woodpecker		58	53	55	65	47	44	51	36	48	
2	2	3				1	1	1			3	2		2			4		7	Hairy Woodpecker		28	19	15	20	17	21	21	14	17	
																	1			Pileated Woodpecker		1	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	
2					1	2		3			1	4		4			2			Northern Flicker		19	8	12	22	10	16	12	17	8	
1									2	1	1			2						Merlin		7	8	1	4	1	2	5	7	3	
																				Gyr Falcon				-1		1					
																				Northern Shrike			1			1	1	2	1	2	
4	9	4			4	11	9	7	5	3	4	14		13	3	2	15	5	2	Blue Jay		114	53	50	160	69	102	96	54	47	
40	32	20	20	22	3	28	20	22	28	19	705	26	26	104	15	13	50	35	27	Black-billed Magpie		747	789	871	726	411	476	368	432	289	
													2	3			2		5	American Crow		12	5	6	7	4	4	3	3	13	
5	3	1		1		2	1	1	1	2	3	4		5	36	4	11	23	26	Common Raven		129	176	263	499	174	128	234	196	341	
53	20	37	3	11	12	34	23	12	49	42	60	32	9	68	33	18	30	25	76	Black-capped Chickadee		647	670	456	1178	729	800	744	852	728	
																				Horned Lark										2	
																				Golden-crowned Kinglet			3		1	-2		5	4	2	
														2						Nuthatch sp.		2	2								
10	1	6		1	4	7	7	2	5	10	4	5	4	14	5	1	12	1		Red-breasted Nuthatch		99	250	49	291	168	143	96	211	100	
2		1				2	1	1	10	1	5	2	1	5	2	1	5	1	9	White-breasted Nuthatch		49	16	12	29	17	24	16	17	10	
									1											Brown Creeper		1	1	2	5	3		1	2	2	
																		20		3	European Starling		23	54	22	86	1	14	33	233	148
											2									Townsend's Solitaire		2		-1		1				2	
																				Varied Thrush					1		1	1	1		
																				Hermit Thrush					1						
		3																		American Robin		3	21	1	8	3		10	10	37	
																				Waxwing sp.			30								
20	220									1				21	72	50	15		131	Bohemian Waxwing		530	596	1970	852	476	270	397	460	1021	
																				Cedar Waxwing			57	4			30		5	101	
429	234	374	58	18	210	273	325	468	160	116	80	486	38	777	21	25	400	30	110	House Sparrow		4632	4207	3403	6292	3515	3379	2668	2512	1976	
																				Finch sp.				40							
									3		15	2			4			1	6	Pine Grosbeak		31		6	48	15		59	2	66	
10						2	26	6	14	8	46	33	12	30		2	4	5	7	House Finch		205	191	350	468	213	353	454	323	525	
																				Purple Finch						1		2			
									25				6		13	20	10			Common Redpoll		74		1052	43	5	46	251	110	494	
																				Hoary Redpoll				2				4		10	
							6								10					Red Crossbill		16	20			36	7		10	137	
																				White-winged Crossbill			2		132	6	1	12	255	115	
																		8		Pine Siskin		8			11	36	9	159	4	35	
																				American Goldfinch			6	2	2	3	1		3		
																				Snow Bunting			20	350	66	56	5	3	200	22	
											1									Dark-eyed Junco		1	25	18	10	2	19	3	14	7	
																				Harris's Sparrow								2			
																				White-throated Sparrow			1	-2	2	1	2	1	1		

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																					Song Sparrow									1	
																						Spotted Towhee							-1		1
																						Rusty Blackbird		1							
																						Brewer's Blackbird								1	
												-1										Common Grackle	-1	1		2		1			
																						Pine Warbler								1	
																				1		Northern Cardinal	1								
916	599	1304	84	1059	235	372	442	542	1078	1074	1407	626	402	1857	261	172	861	986	471		Total Birds - count day	13717	9799	10444	14912	10141	10557	7862	9560	9262	
							1		2			1										Total Birds - count period	4	1	6		6	2	1	1	2

- a minus sign indicates a count period observation (Dec 14 - Jan 5) . These are only recorded if the species was not seen on count day.

																					<b>MAMMALS</b>										
																					Shrew sp.									T	
																				1		Snowshoe Hare	1		T	T	T	2	2	2	1
									3	xT			32	3							White-tailed Jackrabbit	38	23	25	39	20	3	T	7	1	
								2	1	3			1		2					2	American Red Squirrel	13	11	3	14	9	12	5	8	6	
																					American Beaver		CH		T				1		
																					Deer Mouse									T	
				1																	Muskrat	1	T								
																					Vole sp.				1	T				T	
																					Meadow Vole			T					1		
																					Mouse sp.			T	T	T				1	
																					House Mouse			T	T						
																					Porcupine				1	2	T		1	D	
				1							1						4	2	1T		Coyote	8	6	1	18	4	1	5	2	3	
																	1		1T		Red Fox	2	T	1	4	T		1	1		
																					Ermine								1		
																					Weasel sp.									1	
																					Mink			T	T	T					
																					American Badger								T		
																					River Otter			1							
																					Striped Skunk									M	
																					Deer sp.		T	T						T	
																		1		2	Mule Deer	3		9	6		6				
											3				1T				4	2	White-tailed Deer	9	13	22	9	32	22	47	28	7	
																					Moose		2	1							

T - tracks, M - carcass, x - no count given, minus sign - count period observation

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C1	C2	C3a	C3b	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	NEa	NEb	NEc	NW	NWc	SEa	SEb	SEc,d	SWa	SWb	Sector	Year	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
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																					PARTICIPANTS						
C1	Meghan Mickelson, Kerry Hjertaas, Stephanie Gauthier																										
C2	LeeAnn Latremouille, Kiel Drake, Robert Johanson, Roberta Cross																										
C3a	Trent Watts, Anas Ansari, Jane McPhee, Shan Landry, Stan Shadick																										
C3b	Britt Agrey																										
C4	Robert Johanson																										
C5	Mike Gollop																										
C6	Joe Monahan, Carol Armstrong Monahan																										
C7	Jim Paul, Bill MacKenzie FW, Patricia Santos FW																										
C8	Greg Fenty, Norman Zlotkin																										
C9	Donna Bruce, Barbara Sprigings, Phil Taylor, Julie Jensen FW, Bruce Acton FW, Alexander Acton FW, Greg Hutchings FW, Elsbeth Dormuth FW, Jennifer Burgess FW, Dan Loran FW, Janet Loran FW, Heather Loran FW, Melanie Elliot FW																										
NEa	Bob Godwin, Kathy Meeres, Lisa Rohachuk, Kerry Hjertaas, Stephanie Gauthier																										
NEb	Ron Jensen, Jeff Jensen, Carol Blenkin																										
NEc	Valerie Martz FW, Scott Mitchell, Lorrie Sielski, Brandon Wapple, Guy Wapple, Rob Wapple, Sandra Wapple FW																										
NW	Janine McManus, Jeff Harder																										
NWc	David Forbes, Kathlin Simpkins, Geoff Carter, Jenny Carter, Kathleen Carter, Roseanne Carter																										
SEa	Nick Saunders, Joan Feather																										
SEb	Marten Stoffel, Dan Zazelenchuk, Kosala Rajapaksha																										
SEcd	Marten Stoffel, Dan Zazelenchuk																										
SWa	Marc Sabourin, George West																										
SWb	Alexander Acton, Amanda Horvath, Joan Merrill, Don Robertson																										

FW - Feeder Watcher, 18 - Youth

																					EFFORT								
9:21	13:44	9:30	11:00	11:20	12:15	9:30	9:15	9:18	9:25	9:41	9:30	9:00	9:35	9:15	9:00	14:00	8:30	9:51	9:05	Start Time	8:30	8:45	8:34	8:15					
14:03	15:10	14:30	12:00	14:20	14:15	15:30	16:20	14:40	16:43	17:13	15:35	17:15	15:20	16:30	16:00	15:45	17:00	14:42	15:28	End Time	17:15	17:30	17:15	17:15					
4.5	2.0	4.2	1.0	2.2	2.0	3.5	2.0	0.8	7.4	5.3	3.8	5.5	2.6	8.0	3.0	2.3		2.0	0.8	Time on foot (hrs)	62.8	55.1	46.4	116.3	46.4	46.3	30.0	95.0	109.0
0.0	1.4	2.5	0.0	0.3	0.0	4.5	4.6	4.6	1.0	3.9	2.3	3.3	1.8	7.8	3.5	1.8	6.7	4.9	4.7	Time by Car (hrs)	59.4	44.1	45.2	56.5	47.1	47.2	66.0	53.9	55.6
0.6						1.0	2.0	5.0	4.0	3.0		5.0							3.0	Time at Feeder (hrs)	23.6	23.9	40.9	38.9	48.9	15.9	54.0	124.0	109.5
16.5	2.0	7.2	4.1	3.0	10.5	12.4	3.0	1.0	11.5	12.1	3.0	8.0	6.7	20.0	2.0	5.0		3.0	1.5	Dist by foot/ski (km)	132.5	104.5	81.4	286.3	107.3	89.0	72.0		
	18	9		10		42	49	52	26	29	53	46	49	73	68	47	129	66	94	Dist by car (km)	859	870.4	664	750	848	772	924		

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																						<b>WEATHER</b>														
																						Min. Wind (kph)	8	12	11	10	16	2	9							
																						Max. Wind (kph)	21	22	21	20	23	7	15							
																						Wind direction	NNE													
																						Min. Temp. (°C)	-10	-14	-33	-8	-16	-12	-37							
																						Max Temp (°C)	6	-11	-28	-7	-10	-9	-25							
					--									2		--	--					Min Snow Depth (cm)		10	3	15	4	2	0							
1		0.2	--											2		--	--					Max Snow Depth (cm)	2	70	60	32	15	15	20							
			40		--			10	10					--		--	--					Cloud cover AM (%)	mcr	ov	mcr	ov	cr	pcd	cr							
10			--						20					--		--	--					Cloud cover PM (%)	pcr	cd	mcr	ov	cr	pcd	cr							

ov - overcast, cd - cloudy, mcd - mostly cloudy, pcd - partly cloudy, pcr - partly clear, mcr - mostly clear, cr - clear

																						<b>HABITAT</b>														
															5							Evergreen forest									<1					
															10							Mixedwood forest		5							2	1				
															10							Deciduous forest		5							<1					
													20		10	45	65	15	25			Aspen grove/ farmland	10	5	25	10	10	10	15	6	6					
															10							Aspen grove/prairie		10	5				5	1	3					
																						Native prairie								1	2					
																			20			Tame pasture		5						1	1					
														40		10						Farmland	5	15		5	5	5	5	5	6					
																5	10					Farmsteads					5			5	4					
80	50	80	100	50	100	100	100	100	80	82		100	40	80	30	50	25	70			Urban (incl. cottages/landfill)	70	50	65	80	75	70	70	74	70						
										15					5			5				Open water	5					5		4	3					
20	50	20		50						20	3			20	10			10	5		Riparian (river bank)	10	5	5	5	5	10	5	1	4						
																						Other (specify)														