

RESULTS OF 1999 WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

On December 12, 1999 the "fifth" annual Christmas Bird Count was held in the park and the surrounding area. Weather was seasonal with highs in the low 40's, clear skies, and 5-15 mph winds.

We had 17 participants that helped with the count. Total driving miles for the group was 181. Foot miles traveled was 25 ½.

The 6 groups counted 1542 birds which included 42 species. Both of these numbers were records for the Wind Cave bird count. Previous high was 1362 birds and 38 species in 1998.

This was the first count that we located American Kestrel (1), Ring-necked Pheasant (2), Canyon Wren (3), Meadowlark (2), and Gray Partridge (6). An immature Ferruginous Hawk was observed but it was too far out of the count area to officially count with our numbers. It was noted in our comment section on the back of our tally sheet. This would have been a new species for our count area.

Big increases/decreases in numbers or unusual occurrences during 1999 count:

83 Canada Geese ↑ (previous high was 11 in 1995- only second time on count)
17 Mallard ↑ (previous high was 6 in 1998)
464 American Crow ↑ (previous high was 161 in 1996)
129 Wild Turkey ↑ (previous high was 55 in 1997)
069 European Starling ↑ (previous high was 17 in 1998)
008 Northern Shrike ↑ (previous high was 3 in 1997)
016 Golden crowned Kinglet ↑ (previous high was 14 in 1998)
020 Common Redpoll ↑ (previous high was 13 in 1995)
012 American Robin ↑ (previous high was 9 in 1997)
018 American Tree Sparrow ↑ (previous high was 6 in 1997)
028 American Goldfinch ↑ (previous high was 18 in 1997)
020 Townsend's Solitaire ↑ (previous high was 18 in 1998)

001 Red Crossbill ↓ (previous high was 337 in 1998)
004 Bald Eagle ↓ (counted 14 in 1998)
008 Golden Eagle ↓ (counted 18 in 1998)
001 Rough-legged Hawk ↓ (counted 6 in 1998)
001 Pinyon Jay ↓ (counted 46 in 1998)
016 Black-billed Magpie ↓ (counted 25 in 1998)
213 Black-capped Chickadee ↓ (counted 236 in 1998)
035 Red breasted Nuthatch ↓ (counted 82 in 1998)
002 Brown Creeper ↓ (counted 11 in 1998)
238 Dark-eyed Junco ↓ (counted 290 in 1998)

*Entered 7/29/02
by Jon K. Dalglish
WICA. scanned 11/10/03
Bibkey: 176487*

We did find most of the bird species we have become accustomed to locating in December within the Black Hills. We did not locate Gray Jays and Black-backed Woodpeckers, which we have recorded 3 out of our first five years of counting.

Many thanks to all that participated in the 1999 Christmas Bird Count: Helen Brooks, Beth Burkhart, Doug Buttery, Jessie Buttery, Suzie Buttery, Marie Curtin, Martha Jakobek, Todd Jensen, Bob Kobza, Mike Laycock, Bruce Mellberg, Dan Roddy, Jimmy Taylor, Sandy Taylor, Andy Thorstenson, Annie Thorstenson, Dwayne Weber.

Hope to see all of you in the next millennium at the Wind Cave National Park Christmas Bird Count. Mark your calendars for **Sunday, December 17, 2000**. See you there!

Additional information on the bird count(s) can be obtained from Dan or Barb in resource management office.