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Release Friday

598
(73)

12/29/37

Christmas bird count on Mount Desert Island (1937)

The following is a report of the Christmas bird census, a nationwide project sponsored by the National Association of Audubon Societies. A bird census has been taken on Mount Desert Island for the past five years, but this year's list is the largest ever recorded, in spite of the absence of some species known to be present, but unseen on the day of the census. Last year forty-one species were found. Birds found last year, but not this year are as follows: (Lesser?) Scaup, 1; Surf Scoter, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Mockingbird, 1; and Chipping Sparrow, 1. The following is a list of birds on the 1937 Census, but not on the 1936 census: Red-throated Loon, 6; Greater Scaup Duck, 7; Ring-billed Gull, 1; Blue Jay, 1; Dovekie, 5; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Pine Siskin, 10; and Song Sparrow, 2.

The lack of hawks and owls is deplorable, not alone because of their beauty and appeal to the bird lover, but because of their usefulness in keeping red squirrels, mice and rodents from becoming too numerous.

December 23, 1937. 6:45 A.M. to 4:15 P. M. Dawned clear, clouded up, spit snow, cleared, became windy, very changeable and unsettled. 34°F. at start; 29°F. at return. One inch of snow in woods. 100 miles by auto; 20 miles by foot.

Common Loon, 2; Red-throated Loon, 6; Holboell's Grebe, 3; Horned Grebe, 7; European Cormorant, 34; Black Duck, 550 (est.); Greater Scaup Duck, 7; American Golden-eye, 294; Buffle-head, 28; Old Squaw, 68; American Eider, 404; White-winged Scoter, 20; American Scoter, 5; American Merganser, 1; Red-breasted Merganser, 11; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 10; Ruffed Grouse, 9; Great Black-backed Gull, 3; Herring Gull, 250; Ring-billed Gull, 1; Dovekie, 5; Black Guillemot, 8; Downy Woodpecker, 4; Blue Jay, 1; Raven, 2; Crow, 50; Black-capped Chickadee, 75; Acadian Chickadee, 3; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 30; Brown Creeper, 1; Robin, 4; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 27; Northern Shrike, 1; Starling, 20; English Sparrow, 40; Pine Siskin, 10; White-winged Crossbill, 20; Tree Sparrow, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 1; Fox Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 2; Rockdove, 30; Total 44 species; about 2000 individuals. The tree Sparrows, Fox Sparrow, White-throat, and Song Sparrows were found only in the neighborhood of feeding stations. The lack of Hawks and Owls is notable. Purple Finches, Hairy Woodpeckers, and Juncos have been seen regularly before and since the census, but were not recorded the day of the census.

A. E. Brower, Charles Gay, Vernon Lunt, Maurice Sullivan, in three parties.