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2006–2007 Christmas Bird Counts in Nebraska

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2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts in Nebraska

Despite snow and ice storms which forced postponement of several counts and prevented participation by a number of birders, all 14 counts which were held last winter took place again this winter. The total number of species (131) was two more than last year's 129, and the total number of individuals was 177,590, down some 30,000.

Waterfowl numbers were about normal. Canada Goose numbers were down 16,000 from last year, but this is a number which fluctuates on that scale from year to year. Northern Pintails are becoming more abundant on Christmas Counts. Their tallies in the early 1990s were in the single digits, last year's count was 96, and this year 146 were counted, highest since 157 in 1966.

Great Blue Herons hit an all-time high this year with 42 tallied, 14 of those on the Lincoln count. Likewise Northern Harriers were counted in record numbers this year: 106 was this year's count and the previous high was 103 in 1994. Red-tailed Hawks have been increasing during every decade since the 1960s. The average number seen on Christmas counts in the 1960s was 32, in the 1970s the average was 81, in the 1980s it was 208, in the 1990s it was 250, and from 2000 to 2005 it was 373. This year's count of 542 was an all-time high.

Unusual birds this year included the Greater Yellowlegs at Lake McConaughy, only once previously recorded on a Christmas count in 1993 at the same location, and the Slaty-backed Gull at Omaha. The second-ever Inca Dove was found on the Lake McConaughy count; one was counted in 1987 in Kearney. Other doves continue to increase in numbers: Eurasian Collared-Doves were unsurprisingly at an all-time high of 296, and the Mourning Dove tally of 394 was the 5th-highest count.

Seven owl species were counted, despite the fact that Short-eared Owls were missed altogether. The Barn Owl at McConaughy was only the 4th on a Christmas count, and the Snowy at the same location was only the 7th record, including count week birds in 1976 and 1980. The two Northern Saw-whet Owls (DeSoto and Norfolk) tied the previous high count (McConaughy in 2000). The 14 Long-eared Owls at Branched Oak-Seward contributed to the total of 20, 5th-highest count.

Good numbers of Belted Kingfishers were found: 47, 13 of which were on the Lincoln count. Red-bellied Woodpeckers also were abundant; 416, second only to last year's 433. Only 3 Red-headed Woodpeckers were found; their average count since 2000 is 35. The Black-billed Magpie tally (39) was the lowest since 1967. American Crows were scarce, too, despite the 1840 counted at Calamus. This year's total of 3079 is low compared to the average of 7133 since 2000.

Black-capped Chickadee numbers are now in a more normal historical range statewide, although they have not recovered to their pre-2003 levels at several central Nebraska counts. They were missed entirely at Calamus, where their pre-2003 average was 62, and only 3 were found at Grand Island, where their pre-2003 average was 101.

White-breasted Nuthatches were at an all-time high of 858, with 229 of those counted at Omaha. Carolina Wrens also appeared to be having a good year. The total of 47 (on 5 counts) was an all time high count. Just the 22 seen at Omaha would have been an all time high. More Eastern Bluebirds (397) were counted than ever before while American Robins (3793) were at their lowest in 10 years.

Last year's all-time high count of Snow Buntings (31) was easily eclipsed this year with 61, seen at Calamus, Harrison and Lake McConaughy. Northern Cardinals crept up to a new high count of 913, missed only at Crawford and Harrison.

2006-07 CBC Participants

Ames Joe Gubanyi, Clem Klaphake, Steve Lamphere, Jeanne Miller, Wayne Mollhoff, Elizabeth Mulliken, Jerry Mulliken, Don Paseka (compiler), Janis Paseka, Neal Ratzlaff, Carolyn Sonderman, Jerry Toll (12)

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Harrison Wayne Mollhoff (compiler), Bruce Walgren, Donna Walgren (3)

Lake McConaughy Stephen J. Dinsmore (compiler), Bill Huntley, Rodger Knaggs (3)

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Scottsbluff Kathy DeLara, Dean Drawbaugh, Phyllis Drawbaugh, Ann Duey, Michelle Hoff, Helen Hughson, Alice Kenitz (compiler), Ed Newbury, Bonnie Schoen, Ruben Siegfried (10)

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Gr. White-fronted Goose	2						3
Snow Goose	3	1		17	320	4	1,415
Ross's Goose							6
Cackling Goose	281	55	6 cw			56	636
Canada Goose	5,818	3,293	490	1,827	593	6,381	30,767
Trumpeter Swan						cw	8
Wood Duck		2					2
Gadwall	57	9		7		18	103
American Wigeon	8			cw		355	371
Mallard	1,459	815	1,673	660	2,211	8,123	51,544
Northern Shoveler		109		1		2	162
Northern Pintail	6	3		2		133	146
Green-winged Teal	107	7		44		28	216
Canvasback				cw		1	1
Redhead	1	8				2	13
Ring-necked Duck	6	1	1 cw			37	48
Greater Scaup	78					1	79
Lesser Scaup	225	4		1		8	239
Bufflehead	34	4					39
Common Goldeneye	669	25	3	108	4	508	1,834
Hooded Merganser	5	6		7		6	29
Common Merganser	11,754	7		104	17		13,966
Red-breasted Merganser	4						5
Ruddy Duck	3					1	4
Ring-necked Pheasant	10	21	21	1	10	2	164
Sharp-tailed Grouse	3						23
Greater Prairie-Chicken	18						60
Wild Turkey	41		33	301		10	977
Northern Bobwhite			3	12			90
Common Loon	cw						

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Pied-billed Grebe		1		1			2
Red-necked Grebe	1						1
Western Grebe	38						38
Clark's Grebe	1						1
American White Pelican	2			cw			3
Double-crested Cormorant	1			1			2
Great Blue Heron	8	14	1	2	1	4	42
Bald Eagle	53		32	24	14	5	222
adult						4	46
immature						1	17
unspecified age	53		32	24	14		159
Northern Harrier	12	6	4	3	13	5	106
Sharp-shinned Hawk		9	4	5	3	3	36
Cooper's Hawk		3	1	1	1		18
Northern Goshawk							1
Accipiter sp.		6	2	1			9
Red-tailed Hawk	22	39	40	76	50	3	542
Ferruginous Hawk	1						3
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1	2		14	2	45
Buteo sp.		3					5
Golden Eagle							2
American Kestrel	13	17	33	14	17	21	186
Merlin	1	1	2				8
Prairie Falcon							2
falcon sp.				1			1
hawk sp.						1	2
Virginia Rail	2						2
American Coot	10	66		4		49	137
Killdeer	8	2					11
Greater Yellowlegs	1						1

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
Wilson's Snipe		1		6				1
Ring-billed Gull			272	50		1		
California Gull								
Herring Gull			47	2				
Thayer's Gull								
Lesser Black-backed Gull								
Slaty-backed Gull								
Glaucous Gull								
gull sp.				200				
Rock Pigeon	842	63	190	7	99	389	116	5
Eur. Collared-Dove	9	18	26	30	46	14	4	10
Mourning Dove	33		11			63	13	
Inca Dove								
Barn Owl								
Eastern Screech-Owl		2	3	2	1	2	11	2
Great Horned Owl	4	3	7			1	1	3
Snowy Owl								
Barred Owl	1		3			11		
North. Saw-whet Owl						1		
Long-eared Owl			14				2	
Belted Kingfisher	5			3		2	4	
Red-head. Woodpecker								
Red-bell. Woodpecker	34	5	65			51	11	
Yellow-bell. Sapsucker			1					
Downy Woodpecker	32	19	63	4	8	82	13	1
Hairy Woodpecker	12	1	18	4	4	8	3	2
Northern Flicker	58	15	91	18	1	165	38	
Loggerhead Shrike			1					
Northern Shrike			8	5	6		1	1
Blue Jay	17	3	146	2	4	66	24	

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Wilson's Snipe	1		5				14
Ring-billed Gull	890	65		43		1	1,322
California Gull	27						27
Herring Gull	293						342
Thayer's Gull	4						4
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1						1
Slaty-backed Gull				1			1
Glaucous Gull	1						1
gull sp.							200
Rock Pigeon	7	737	423	672	106	250	3,906
Eurasian Collared-Dove	51					88	296
Mourning Dove	6	190	8	64	6		394
Inca Dove	1						1
Barn Owl	1						1
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	2	5		1	3	35
Great Horned Owl	2	9	8	1	4	1	44
Snowy Owl	1						1
Barred Owl		3		5	1		24
North. Saw-whet Owl			1				2
Long-eared Owl	1		1		2		20
Belted Kingfisher	2	13	4	7	3	4	47
Red-headed Woodpecker		1	1	1			3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	50	17	152	29	cw	416
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				1			2
Downy Woodpecker	13	112	42	122	29	10	550
Hairy Woodpecker	6	12	9	22	8	2	111
Northern Flicker	13	24	16	85	31	27	582
Loggerhead Shrike							1
Northern Shrike	1	3	4		2	1	32
Blue Jay	14	190	17	52	1	34	570

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
Black-billed Magpie					11		3	
American Crow	24	15	403	1,840	46	244	24	60
Horned Lark	38	200	73	6	79	34	125	53
Bl.-capped Chickadee	61	10	47		62	206	3	9
Tufted Titmouse						8		
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2		7			3	1	2
White-br. Nuthatch	57	47	60		5	107	152	4
Pygmy Nuthatch					10			20
Brown Creeper	2	3	6			2	1	
Carolina Wren	7		2			2		
Winter Wren			1			1		
Marsh Wren								
Golden-cr. Kinglet	10	3	13	4		14	4	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet								
Eastern Bluebird	65		143	1		83	32	
Townsend's Solitaire			1		2			2
Hermit Thrush				1				
American Robin	493	157	531	220		95	146	5
Northern Mockingbird								
Brown Thrasher			1					
European Starling	3,357	336	1,180	44	154	1,960	1,282	56
Cedar Waxwing	86	243	351	11		97	49	
Yellow-rump. Warbler	1		6				1	
Spotted Towhee								
American Tree Sparrow	68	94	712	126	113	484	82	37
Field Sparrow							3	
Fox Sparrow	1		3					
Song Sparrow	3	1	13	1		10	3	1
White-throat. Sparrow	1		1					
Harris' Sparrow	5	2	92			51	7	

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
Black-billed Magpie	16					9	39
American Crow	1	70	43	216	74	19	3,079
Horned Lark	76	2	63			120	869
Black-capped Chickadee	7	79	31	364	93	10	982
Tufted Titmouse				34			42
Red-breasted Nuthatch		11	7	1		1	35
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	97	55	229	42	1	858
Pygmy Nuthatch							30
Brown Creeper		24	2	13	1		54
Carolina Wren		14		22			47
Winter Wren		1		1			4
Marsh Wren	1						1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	34		4			88
Ruby-crowned Kinglet						1	1
Eastern Bluebird		7		54	12		397
Townsend's Solitaire	15					5	25
Hermit Thrush							1
American Robin	203	33	16	354	1,156	384	3,793
Northern Mockingbird		1					1
Brown Thrasher							1
European Starling	370	5,679	7,872	6,500	830	1,764	31,384
Cedar Waxwing	24	60	50	165	74	17	1,227
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1			2			11
Spotted Towhee		5					5
American Tree Sparrow	107	448	550	441	171	2	3,435
Field Sparrow							3
Fox Sparrow		1					5
Song Sparrow	12	11	4	17		2	78
White-throated Sparrow		29		5			36
Harris' Sparrow	2	11	24	39			233

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Ames	Beaver Valley	Branched Oak-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
White-crowned Sparrow				1				
Dark-eyed Junco	250	155	940	188	74	910	197	48
Slate-colored			276		29			
Oregon			4		21			3
White-winged					2			
Pink-sided					3			
unspecified subsp.	250	155	660	188	19	910	197	45
Lapland Longspur		1	53			2	15	
Snow Bunting				4				21
Northern Cardinal	30	6	134	4		148	31	
Red-winged Blackbird	300		203	3	34	21	91	
Western Meadowlark	24				1	1		
meadowlark sp.	26		35	1		60	6	
Rusty Blackbird			34					
Brewer's Blackbird								
Common Grackle	1		1				24	
Great-tailed Grackle								
Brown-headed Cowbird								
blackbird sp.		1						
Purple Finch	2	3	21			1		
House Finch	4	34	114	28	12	13	77	
Common Redpoll						9		8
Red Crossbill					6			
Pine Siskin			4		14			
American Goldfinch	144	186	705	91	191	216	79	54
House Sparrow	365	71	451	28	205	293	163	56
TOTAL SPECIES	51	39	73	56	35	65	60	28
TOTAL INDIVIDUAL	14,167	2,241	9,001	10,834	1,389	35,201	9,934	529

2006-2007 Christmas Bird Counts

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	Omaha	Ponca State Park	Scottsbluff	Total
White-crowned Sparrow	1					3	5
Dark-eyed Junco	318	859	275	755	227	102	5,298
Slate-colored	109	158		755		13	1,340
Oregon	26	13				18	85
White-winged	1						3
Pink-sided	25					2	30
unspecified subspecies	157	688	275		227	69	3,840
Lapland Longspur	43						114
Snow Bunting	36						61
Northern Cardinal	22	212	29	258	38	1	913
Red-winged Blackbird	8	1	86	250	429	1,111	2,537
Western Meadowlark							26
meadowlark sp.	21	3	62	25		cw	239
Rusty Blackbird			6		5		45
Brewer's Blackbird		1					1
Common Grackle		cw	5				31
Great-tailed Grackle		1					1
Brown-headed Cowbird		1	2				3
blackbird sp.							1
Purple Finch				6			33
House Finch	100	166	54	63	19	239	923
Common Redpoll	2						19
Red Crossbill							6
Pine Siskin	6	2	3		1	76	106
American Goldfinch	77	298	160	216	34	400	2,851
House Sparrow	204	606	331	775	130	234	3,912
TOTAL SPECIES	90	73	55	64	44	59	131
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	23,783	14,716	12,642	15,262	6,827	20,691	177,217

2006-07 CBC Site Data

	Date	Species	Individuals	Observers	Low Temp	High Temp	Sky (am/pm)	Precip.
Ames	3 Jan 07	51	14,167	12	26	42	clear	none
Beaver Valley	28 Dec	39	2,241	7	26	36	cloudy	none
Branched Oak/Seward	16 Dec	73	9,001	18	34	51	cloudy	none
Calamus-Loup	23 Dec	56	10,834	6	10	30	partly cloudy	none
Crawford	3 Jan 07	35	1,389	6 + 1	26	36	mostly cloudy	none
DeSoto-Boyer	23 Dec	65	35,201	22	28	43	cloudy	none
Grand Island	16 Dec	60	9,934	11 + 3	36	52	cloudy	none
Harrison	2 Jan 07	28	529	3	16	46	partly cloudy	none
Lake McConaughy	28 Dec	90	23,783	3	27	34	clear/partly cloudy	none
Lincoln	17 Dec	73	14,716	27	22	42	partly cloudy	none
Norfolk	16 Dec	55	12,642	18	38	51	cloudy/partly cloudy	none
Omaha	16 Dec	64	15,262	33	38	52	fog/partly cloudy	none
Ponca S.P.	23 Dec	44	6,827	13	26	37	cloudy/clear	none
Scottsbluff	16 Dec	59	20,691	10	31	43	partly cloudy	none
Total		131	177,217	189 + 4				

Additional observer numbers at Crawford and Grand Island are feeder watchers.