



Bird Notes

From Northeast Kingdom Audubon
1302 Main Street, Saint Johnsbury, Vermont 05819

For Immediate Release

Birds of Early Winters Past and Present

If it is not too early to put up the Christmas decorations, it is definitely not too early to think about the 2007 Christmas Bird Count, is it? When some birds are in the late stages of their southward migration, some of us may be in the late stages of putting away the vestiges of summer and fall around the yard, especially when snow has yet to cover things. With bears just on the way to bed for the winter, our washed feeders full of fresh seeds can return to our yards, just in time for the first day of counting, December 14th. Until January 5th, your bird feeding stations could attract some interesting hangers-on, as well as some newcomers from the north, not to mention the early Christmas bird counters out scouting their areas for good counting sites. You will recognize them, driving slowly by your house early in the morning. But wait, why not become one your self! From sun up to sun down, either from your car window or your house window, you can contribute to the longest running bird database in ornithology, representing over a century of unbroken data on trends of early-winter bird populations across the Americas. The tally parties are really fun, too.

Just one year ago, this column began with a description of this holiday alternative. Once an actual hunt, this census has become an important scientific tool for bird conservation. Records are being broken each year as more birds are being counted, the more people get involved. Last year 2,060 counts were completed and 61,579,102 birds were reported – now that's data!

To find out where any count will take place, log onto the National Audubon website, <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/getinvolved.html>. For counts in northern Vermont and New Hampshire, go to <http://www.ebird.org/VINS/news/cbc.html> (Vermont) or contact Charlie Brown at the Fairbanks Museum, 802/748-2372, ext.104; email: cbrowne@fairbanksmuseum.org. In New Hampshire, go to www.nhaudubon.org, or contact Chris Martin at NH Audubon, 603/224-9909 ext.317; e-mail: cmartin@nhaudubon.org.

If you would you like to explore the data from Christmas seasons past, you can visit the National Audubon Christmas Bird Count sponsor home page at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>. But for now, let the spirit of Christmas Bird Count present fill you with the interest to join in and enjoy this great holiday alternative, for another year.

Happy Bird Counting!

Carolyn E. Boardman is a board member of NEK Audubon living in Brownington, Vermont. NEK Audubon is one of 8 chapters of Audubon Vermont and part of the National Audubon Society. NEK Audubon is a non -profit organization that encourages people's enjoyment of birds, wildlife

and natural habitats through field trips, programs and publications. For more information about meetings, field trips and special events visit www.nekaudubon.org. Art work by Robin Rothman.