

8 January 2024

Dear Bird Counters: Thanks for making Baraboo's 2023 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) successful, even though it felt like there weren't many land birds in our yards or in field counting that day. It was our 2nd highest effort in both field party-hours and yard watching hours. We had 61 total counters, tied for this count's 3rd highest.

The results are attached: page 2 listing the Baraboo CBC "career record" counts for each species, page 3 with observation effort and counter names, 2023 Photo Highlights, and a summary of 1980-2023 count results, and page 4 with the birds we found. We found 61 species of birds on the Dec. 27 CBC, which is a credit to our highly skilled and hard working counters persevering even though birds were hard to find. We found two individuals each of four Count Week birds (found Dec. 24-30 but not on our CBC): Trumpeter Swans, Black Ducks, ravens, and Horned Larks. Horned Lark is the only bird not found on the CBC that we had found on more than half of the previous 43 counts.

The total individual birds was 13,510, which is our count's 3rd highest total. But Sandhill Cranes (yippee!), Canada Geese, crows, and starlings added to 8,688 birds, leaving only 4,822 distributed over the remaining 57 species.

Because of an increase in the number of counters since 1980 and warming average temperatures, the Baraboo CBC has increased its average species list with each decade: 37.2 species/count during 1980-89, 44.1 during 1990-99, 58.1 during 2000-09, 59.5 during 2010-19, and 63.8 in 2020-23. A table on page 3 summarizes the birds from all years of our count. Also helping recent bird lists are improvements in bird ID materials and accelerated communication about where uncommon birds are located. But mostly, you counters are very good at this, and you work hard at finding birds!

I think that this year our counters found all but 7 species (last year it was 8) that had been found on 1/3 or more of Baraboo's 43 previous counts. Our counters offset these misses by finding 11 species found on fewer than 1/3 of previous counts, including 8 species found on 0-10 of the past 43 counts.

Two western mountain birds headlined our rare finds (see 2023 Photo Highlights). Cicero Stewart got called in to try to find "The" **Gray-crowned Rosy Finch** atop Devil's Lake's East Bluff after it didn't appear for the morning searchers. Cicero found the finch and got great pictures of this mega-rarity that has become a tourist attraction for people willing to walk a bunch, get to the top of the East Bluff, try really hard, and maybe not find one. Also amazing was the record-breaking 6 Townsend's Solitaires found by Brian Doverspike and Aaron Holschbach at Devil's Lake, which put's Baraboo's state-record high CBC count (already held by Baraboo) of this Devil's Lake specialty bird out of reach of any other count.

These birds from our CBC had only been found on 2-5 of our counts before (see next page for how frequently each has been found): Cackling Geese found by the Bill Beers-Eric Hamburg-Dave Mowers team (7 birds) and Alexis and Sam Seguin (one). A Lesser Scaup found by Aaron Holschbach and Brian Doverspike, and a Hooded Merganser found by Bill Smith and Steve Braband--both ducks at Devil's Lake.

These birds had been found in only 6-10 previous counts: Cicero Stewart found a Merlin; Brian Doverspike and Aaron Holschbach a Yellow-rumped Warbler, and the family of Lisa Hartman and Angus & Mike Mossman heard a Winter Wren calling at their beloved Pine Glen in Devil's Lake State Park.

Birds on our 2023 list found on just 11-12 of our previous 43 counts were Townsend's Solitaire (see above) and the fan favorite Carolina Wren, found by Aaron Holschbach and Brian Doverspike, and by yard watcher Jim Fawcett.

We set record high counts for 5 species and tied two records, in addition to adding Gray-crowned Rosy Finch to the Baraboo CBC's all-time list. 5,169 Sandhill Cranes found by four field teams northeast of Baraboo (Anne Lacy, Karen Mesmer and Robert Rolley, Graham Steinhauer and Levi Wood, and Aaron Holschbach and Brian Doverspike) puts another one of our crane counts (we had 5,000 in 2011) among the highest in Wisconsin CBC history; not added to this total because of likely repeats and the impossibility of knowing which are repeats was 2,004 cranes reported by yard watchers NE of Baraboo, and 2,300 cranes counted by Aaron Holschbach NE of Baraboo as he traveled between two other areas he was counting. Sharp-shinned Hawks edged out a 10-year-old record. In 2022 we tied our Barred Owl record with 8, but this year we demolished it with 13 birds. Brian Doverspike and Aaron Holschbach found 6 to double our previous high of 3 Townsend's Solitaires from 2010 and 2015. The only other songbird to beat its old count was House Finch, with 502 (old record 433). Cicero Stewart's Merlin tied six other counts with 1. A surprising 6 Red-headed Woodpeckers (2 by Karen Mesmer and Robert Rolley, 2 by Anne Lacy, 1 by yard counter Julie Zajicek, and 1 by the Todd Persche-Don Stone-John Taapken team) tied a record shared by the 1st, 2nd, and 38th of our 44 counts.

Yard watchers found at least 29 kinds and 3000 individual birds. Besides yard highlights mentioned above, Louise Crisman and Kevin Kutschenreuter combined for 50 Pine Siskins, and Louise had a Northern Shrike. Yard watchers found 46 titmice, including 16 by Vogt-Schallers. Jim Fawcett found a White-throated Sparrow. Yard watchers also pumped up the counts of finches, woodpeckers, and other forest birds. I hope you enjoyed counting.

I hope you enjoyed counting. The next Baraboo Christmas Bird Count will be **Friday Dec. 27, 2024**. Please join us! Sincerely, Scott Swengel, 909 Birch St., Baraboo WI 53913; phone 608-356-9543; email aswengel@jvl.net

BARABOO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT Cumulative Species List 1980-2023 Notes: Fractions indicate years seen/years of count; then record number, and year(s). **Bold** count and bold "**2023**" = record high counts in 2023; bold "'2023'" means the 2023 count tied the record high; **bold species name, count, and 2023** = new species added in 2023. X = count week birds, bolded if ties previous CW high (5 species found only during CW not included in the grand total of 122 species found on the count; towhees only count for 1 species).

Common Loon 1/44 1 - 1982, X '02, '04
 Great Blue Heron 14/44 2 – 2004, 2016
 Snow Goose 0/44 CW - 2021
 Canada Goose 40/44 5600 - 1994
 Cackling Goose 4/44 10 – 2011
 Greater White-fronted Goose 1/44 3 - 2002
 Mute Swan 1/44 1 – 2019 X - 2011
 Trumpeter Swan 2/44 2 - 2022, X '06, '23
 Tundra Swan 4/44 2 - 2004, X '82, '87, '97, '21
 Wood Duck 4/44 2 - 2001, 2016
 Gadwall 3/44 4 - 2017
 American Black Duck 15/44 11 - 2002, X 2003, '16, '23
 Mallard 40/44 829 – 2001
 Northern Pintail 1/44 1 - 2022
 Green-winged Teal 2/44 1 - 1999, '01
 Canvasback 2/44 3 - 2005
 Redhead 1/44 10 – 2020 X 2015
 Ring-necked Duck 2/44 1 - 1981, '06, X '02, '15
 Greater Scaup 1/44 1 – 2021
 Lesser Scaup 5/44 7 – 2002
 Harlequin Duck 1/44 1 - 2020
 Surf Scoter 0/44 CW - 2020
 Long-tailed Duck 2/44 1 – 2012, 2020
 Bufflehead 5/44 8 - 2020, X '02
 Common Goldeneye 37/44 187 - 2017
 Hooded Merganser 6/44 3 – 2011, 2016, X '12
 Common Merganser 35/44 152 – 2009, X '82, '84
 Ruddy Duck 2/44 5 - 2020
 Turkey Vulture 7/44 4 - 1994, X '08, '21
 Bald Eagle 40/44 85 – 2009, X '84, '92
 Northern Harrier 16/44 6 – 2017, X '85, '22
 Sharp-shinned Hawk 36/44 **7 - 2023**, X '05
 Cooper's Hawk 36/44 10 -- 2017
 Northern Goshawk 2/44, 3- 1983, 2009
 Red-shouldered Hawk 6/44 2 - 2022 X '10, '11
 Red-tailed hawk 44/44 85 - 2009
 Rough-legged Hawk 43/44 34 - 1996
 Golden Eagle 13/44 3 -- 2016, 2017, X '10, '18
 American Kestrel 43/44 13 - 2012
 Merlin 7/44 1 - 2000, '10, '11, '14, '17, '18, **2023**
 Peregrine Falcon 1/44 1 – 2017 X 2022
 Ring-necked Pheasant 21/44 10 – 2003, X '14
 Ruffed Grouse 17/44 10 - 1981
 Wild Turkey 31/44 348 - 2022
 Northern Bobwhite 2/44 12 – 1981, X '90
 American Coot 4/44 11 - 1997
 Sandhill Crane 14/44 **5169 - 2023**, X '09, '14
 Killdeer 6/44 4 - 1980, '81
 Wilson's Snipe 19/44 14 - 1999, X '83, '01, '08
 Ring-billed Gull 9/44 196 - 2001, X '97, '02
 Herring Gull 15/44 267 - 2003, X '14
 Rock Pigeon 44/44 601 - 2015
 Eurasian Collared-Dove 0/44 CW - 2010
 Mourning Dove 43/44 723 - 2012
 Eastern Screech-Owl 29/44 8 - 2010
 Great Horned Owl 38/44 11 - 2021
 Snowy Owl 1/44 1 - 1983, X - '01
 Barred Owl 32/44 **13 – 2023**, X '04
 Long-eared Owl 20/44 4 – 2013, 2014
 Short-eared Owl 1/44 1 - 2007
 Northern Saw-whet Owl 25/44 20 - 2015
 Belted Kingfisher 26/44 8 - 2022, X '08
 Red-headed Woodpecker 25/44 6 - 1980, '81, '17, **2023**, X '14
 Red-bellied Woodpecker 44/44 149 – 2022
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 17/44 4 – 2008, '13, '16
 Downy Woodpecker 44/44 237 – 2022
 Hairy Woodpecker 44/44 86 -- 2022
 Northern Flicker 37/44 20- 2011
 Pileated Woodpecker 42/44 27 – 2022
 Eastern Phoebe 1/44 1 – 2016
 Northern Shrike 37/44 12 - 2007
 Blue Jay 44/44 588 - 2022
 American Crow 44/44 1307 - 2016
 Common Raven 5/44 4 - 2022, X '04, '18, '23
 Horned Lark 28/44 338 – 2021, X 2019, '23
 Black-capped Chickadee 44/44 774 - 2010
 Tufted Titmouse 35/44 124 – 2022, X '96
 Red-breasted Nuthatch 39/44 42 – 2009, '17
 White-breasted Nuthatch 44/44 290 - 2022
 Brown Creeper 37/44 14 - 2008
 Carolina Wren 13/44 3 - 2005, '06, '22
 Winter Wren 10/44 10 - 2004, X '07, '08, '10, '11, '12, '14, '18
 Golden-crowned Kinglet 24/44 9 - 1982
 Eastern Bluebird 25/44 46 - 2013
 Townsend's Solitaire 12/44 **6 – 2023** X '12, '14, '18, '20, '21
 Hermit Thrush 2/44 1 - 2005, 2012, X '21
 American Robin 32/44 166 - 2022
 Northern Mockingbird 1/44 1 - 1996
 Brown Thrasher 2/44 1 - 1987, '10
 European Starling 44/44 1583 - 2006
 Cedar Waxwing 34/44 904 - 2013
 Bohemian Waxwing 3/44 55 - 1995
 Yellow-rumped Warbler 8/44 4 – 2008, X '14
 Common Yellowthroat 0/44, CW - 1981
 Eastern Towhee 1/44 1 - 2000, X '81
 towhee sp. (Eastern/Spotted) 1/44 1 - 2005
 American Tree Sparrow 44/44 1059 - 2013
 Chipping Sparrow 2/44 1 - '07, 2011, X '01
 Field Sparrow 5/44 2 – 1990, 2022
 Savannah Sparrow 3/44 1 – 2013, '15, '17
 Fox Sparrow 8/44 5 - 2013
 Song Sparrow 26/44 11 – 2017, X '18
 Lincoln's Sparrow 1/44, 1 - 2008
 Swamp Sparrow 10/44 3 – 2002, X '21
 White-throated Sparrow 19/44 7 – 2016, X '17
 Harris' Sparrow 1/44 1 - 1998
 White-crowned Sparrow 5/44 3 - 2020, X '00, '08
 Dark-eyed Junco 44/44 2898 - 2021
 Lapland Longspur 10/44 125 - 1984
 Snow Bunting 13/44 84 - 2013, X '85, '99, '20
 Northern Cardinal 44/44 376 - 2012
 Baltimore Oriole 0/44 CW -- 2017
 Red-winged Blackbird 8/44 20 - 1998
 Rusty Blackbird 2/44 3 – 1981
 Brewer's Blackbird 1/44 1 - 2022
 Common Grackle 2/44 200 - 2011
 Brown-headed Cowbird 2/44 4 - 2020
 Pine Grosbeak 2/44 20 – 1985
Gray-crowned Rosy Finch 1 - 2023
 Purple Finch 43/44 97 - 2005
 House Finch 35/44 **502 - 2023**, X '88
 Red Crossbill 1/44 2-2010, X '81
 White-winged Crossbill 4/44 45 - 2008
 Common Redpoll 17/44 125 - 1985
 Pine Siskin 37/44 665 - 2017
 American Goldfinch 44/44 663 - 2012
 Evening Grosbeak 8/44 92 – 1980, X '86, '90, '13
 House Sparrow 44/44 1102 - 2012

WSO Christmas Bird Count Form

Count Name Baraboo, Wisconsin (WIBA) Date Conducted 12/27/2023
 Center of Count Circle Jct. of County Hwy A and City View Road County of Count center Sauk
 Compiler Scott Swengel 909 Birch St., Baraboo, WI 53913 Phone 608-356-9543 Email aswengel@jvlnet.com

Weather

Partly clear/sunny AM, mostly cloudy PM Snow Cover (inches) 0 Wind var 0-10 Temperature 30-41°F

Participant Data

At least 4 field observers also did some yard watching

Total Field Observers 36 Total Field Parties 20 Yard Watchers 25 Total Observers 61
 *Total Party-Hours 110.45 On Foot 58.6 By Car 51.85 Hours Owling 9.75 Hours Yard Watching 67.5
 *Total Party- miles 599.7 Miles on Foot 51.45 Miles by Car 548.25 Miles Owling 23

*Party- hours and party-miles is the sum of hours spent or miles traveled in the field by all parties; several people counting together is 1 party. This does **not** include time owling or observation time of yard watchers,

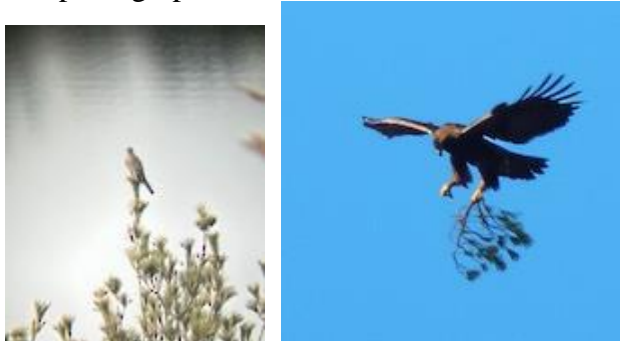
Counters (*=yard watcher) Carol Anderson, Muffy Barrett, Bill Beers, Gail* & Gilbert Bird*, Steve Braband, Nate Chotlos, Louise Crisman*, Diane Cullison*, Brian Doverspike, James Fawcett*, Joan Fedkenheur*, David* & Elsie* Gilmore, Eric Hamburg, Lisa Hartman, Kay Hobler*, Aaron Holschbach, Buddy* & Marcy* Huffaker, Kevin Kutschenreuter*, Tony Kalenic, Anne Lacy, Teresa Mayer*, Karen Mesmer, Sara Gavney Moore* & Dorn Moore*, Angus & Mike Mossman, Dave Mowers, Larry Pawlak*, Maia & Todd Persche, Cathy Pickel, Robert Rolley, Jaye Rykuny, H.S. Sathya Chandra Sagar, Betty Schultz*, Kevin and Teresa* Searock, Alexis & Sam Seguin, Bill Smith, Judy Spring*, Bruce, Cicero, and Molly Stewart, Graham Steinhauer, Don & Tom Stone, Ann & Scott Swengel, John Taapken, Sharon* & Warren* Terry, Jeff* & Ann* Vogt-Schaller, Scott Weber, Lynn Webster*, Levi Wood, and Julie Zajicek*.

2023 Photo Highlights—All from Devil’s Lake State Park

Below: Cicero Stewart got stunning photos of this Gray-crowned Rosy Finch for our count, an incredibly rare find in Wisconsin that strayed from the Rockies. This finch is difficult to notice because it will remain still and, in spite of a pretty rosy belly and rump, blends in with the ground or rocks on which it frequently stands.



Below left: One of a Wisconsin CBC state record-high 6 Townsend’s Solitaires found by Brian Doverspike and photographer Aaron Holschbach on the East Bluff.



Above right: Bill Smith found an adult male Golden Eagle collecting sticks for a likely nest. Golden Eagles have vastly increased on our count in the last 15 years.

Birds found on Baraboo Counts 1980-2023

Year	Species	Individuals	Year	Species	Individuals
1980	36	2,027	2002	61	7,226
1981	44	1,533	2003	55	7,540
1982	34	1,712	2004	57	9,601
1983	28	1,140	2005	56	7,410
1984	31	1,283	2006	59	8,769
1985	35	1,712	2007	58	5,838
1986	38	2,743	2008	61	7,436
1987	40	2,320	2009	58	7,335
1988	37	5,170	2010	59	7,798
1989	49	3,316	2011	62	16,738
1990	41	2,636	2012	61	12,154
1991	45	3,900	2013	58	10,173
1992	39	2,696	2014	51	6,905
1993	35	5,231	2015	67	9,516
1994	42	8,372	2016	60	8,976
1995	45	4,059	2017	65	9,694
1996	37	4,981	2018	51	8,028
1997	48	6,884	2019	61	11,980
1998	58	6,013	2020	62	9,128
1999	51	9,524	2021	68	15,759
2000	53	6,820	2022	64	11,867
2001	63	9,147	2023	61	13,510

Baraboo Christmas Bird Count Birds 12/27/2023 This is the number of each species seen or heard on the count day. "CW" is for species found during the count week December 24-30 but not on the count day.

Canada Goose 1507
 Cackling Goose 8
 Trumpeter Swan CW
 American Black Duck CW
 Mallard 116
 Lesser Scaup 1
 Common Goldeneye 64
 Hooded Merganser 1
 Common Merganser 3
 Wild Turkey 172
 Bald Eagle 45 (6 adult, 1 imm., 38 unaged)
 Sharp-shinned Hawk 7
 Cooper's Hawk 6
 Red-tailed Hawk 41
 Rough-legged Hawk 1
 Golden Eagle 2 (1 adult, 1 unaged)
 American Kestrel 5
 Merlin 1
 Sandhill 5169
 Wilson's Snipe 1
 Rock Pigeon 252
 Mourning Dove 115
 E. Screech-Owl 5
 Great Horned Owl 9
 Barred Owl 13
 N. Saw-whet Owl 3
 Belted Kingfisher 7
 Red-headed Woodpecker 6
 Red-bellied Woodpecker 87
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1
 Downy Woodpecker 175
 Hairy Woodpecker 72
 Northern Flicker 8
 Pileated Woodpecker 21
 Northern Shrike 3
 Blue Jay 222
 American Crow 989
 Common Raven CW
 Horned Lark CW
 Black-capped Chickadee 571

Tufted Titmouse 104
 Red-br. Nuthatch 2
 White-br. Nuthatch 256
 Brown Creeper 10
 Carolina Wren 2
 Winter Wren 1
 Golden-crowned Kinglet 1
 Eastern Bluebird 19
 Townsend's Solitaire 6
 American Robin 11
 European Starling 1023
 Cedar Waxwing 125
 Yellow-rumped Warbler 1
 Am. Tree Sparrow 109
 Song Sparrow 1
 White-throated Sparrow 4
 Dark-eyed Junco 505
 Northern Cardinal 160
Gray-crowned Rosy Finch 1
 Purple Finch 14
 House Finch 502
 Pine Siskin 108
 American Goldfinch 237
 House Sparrow 583

Unidentified birds (included in total individual birds but not all count in species total)
 eagle sp. 1
 Larus/gull sp. 15 (counts as an additional species because we found no other gulls)

Total count day **Species** 61

Additional **Count Week Species** 4

Total Count Day **Individuals** 13,510

 Provide documentation for any species in **bold print (Gray-crowned Rosy Finch)**