

Birding in the Towns of Yates and Somerset

There are a number of bird counts conducted in our area. You can participate as a local resident by reporting what you see on the lake, at your feeder, or during one of the other organized bird counts each year. This is a wonderful way to enjoy the variety of birds that pass our way and help to determine both numbers and species that are part of the natural beauty we enjoy and hope to preserve.

The Great Backyard Bird Count. The Great Backyard Bird Count is a popular citizen science event where people collect valuable information on the health of bird populations all over the world. It's free and easy to participate. The next GBBC is February 12-15, 2016. In addition to the count there is a photo contest, with many displayed on their website. You can search for specific information being collect in your county online. For the Orleans County link:

<http://ebird.org/ebird/gbbc/subnational2/US-NY-073?yr=all>. For Niagara County:

<http://ebird.org/ebird/gbbc/subnational2/US-NY-063?yr=cur>. In addition, there's an android app, eBird Mobile now available free in the Google Play store, that allows you to enter eBird observations from anywhere in the world.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society started the Great Backyard Bird Count in 1998. Back then, most of the counts were done in the United States and Canada. In 2013, the event went global and many counts were done in countries such as India, Europe, Mexico, and Australia. During the 2014 count, nearly 4,300 bird species were identified, which is estimated to represent about 43% of all the bird species on Earth. <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

Project Feeder Watch. The Cornell Lab also sponsors Project FeederWatch, a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance. Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs. Participants watch their feeders as much or as little as they

want over two consecutive days as often as every week (less often is fine). They count birds that appear in their count site because of something that they provided (plantings, food, or water). New participants are sent a [Research Kit](#) with complete instructions for participating, as well as a bird identification poster and more. You provide the feeder(s) and seed. <http://feederwatch.org/>

Buffalo Ornithological Society: The Buffalo Ornithological Society was established in 1929 to promote the study of the birds of the Niagara Frontier Region. The BOS coverage area includes western New York and parts of nearby Ontario, Canada. This region is rich in bird life with over 380 species and 25 recognizable subspecies of birds recorded. Explore the site to learn more about where to report and find birds, both regional specialties and rare visitors. <http://www.buffaloornithologicalsociety.org/>

Lakeshore Waterfowl: Each January, members visit lakes, rivers and shorelines to count waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans, loons, grebes, etc.). NYSOA has conducted this survey annually since 1955. In most years, more than a quarter of a million birds are tallied. In addition to being an enjoyable outing, DEC has acknowledged this to be a useful survey for long-term monitoring of waterfowl populations wintering in New York. If you would like to participate, or want more information, contact your [regional compiler](#) or count coordinator, [Bill Ostrander](#). The count will always begin the Saturday just before Martin Luther King Day, which is the third Monday in January. The next count is January 16-24, 2016, with a target date of January 17. <http://www.nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm>

The Christmas Bird Count: Organized by the Audubon Society, this count takes place in specifically designated areas. The closest to us is the area around Wilson. It is the 116th year for this Audubon count.

<http://audubon.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=e67e3b8ea8e0434d81128d76b8aa0d3d>

Lakeshore Nature Tours is a tour company and guide service focusing on the birdlife of the Northeast, and regionally within Western New York. Dedicated to providing professional and personal guidance at the most exciting and beautiful natural history destinations, Brett Ewald is a local bird expert who conducts tours and walks in the area. Brett kindly provided much of the information presented here.

<http://www.lakeshorenaturetours.com/about/about.html>

